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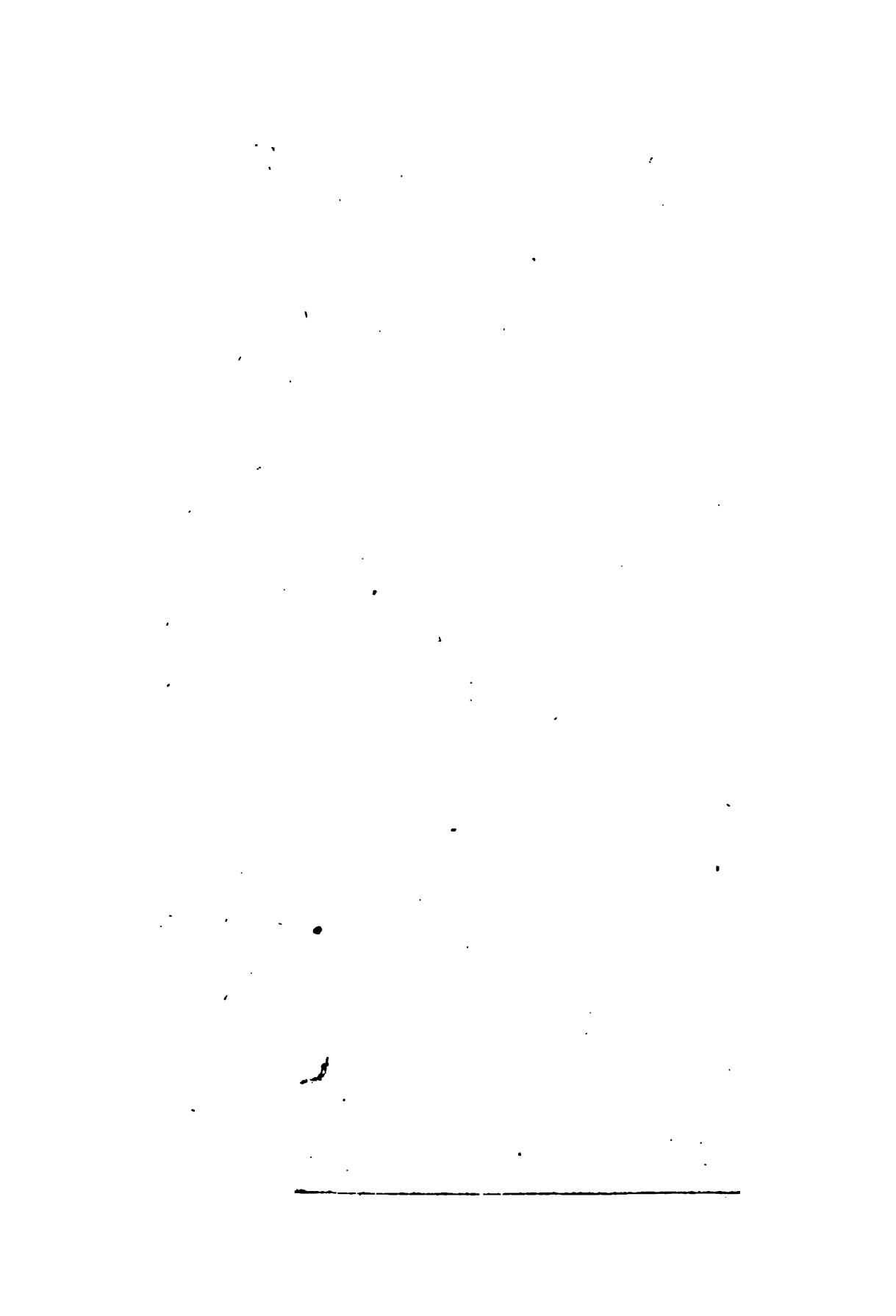






B. 1

YFE



T H E  
D I G N I T Y  
O F  
H U M A N N A T U R E .

O R ,

A brief Account of the certain and established  
Means for attaining the true End  
of our Existence.

I N F O U R B O O K S .

- I. Of PRUDENCE.
- II. Of KNOWLEDGE.
- III. Of VIRTUE.
- IV. Of REVEALED RELIGION.

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A N E W E D I T I O N .

---

By <sup>U R G H J</sup> J. B. MASTER of an ACADEMY at  
Newington-Green, Middlesex.

---

*Qui se ipse norit, intelliget se habere aliquid Divinum, semperque  
et sentiet et faciet aliquid tanto munere dignum.* Cic.

---

V O L . I .

---

L O N D O N .

Printed for J. JOHNSON and J. PAYNE, in *Pater-noster-row*;  
and T. CADELL, in *The Strand*.

MDCCCLXVII.



1905. W. 21  
1906. W. 21  
1907. W. 21

TO HER  
ROYAL HIGHNESS  
THE  
Princess Dowager  
OF  
W A L E S\*.

*May it please Your Royal Highness,*

**W**ERE the subject of the following sheets treated in a manner suitable to its importance, the work would make an offering worthy of a Princess, whose character and conduct exhibit so fair a pattern of the Dignity of human Nature. The gracious condescension voluntarily shewn to the author of the following weak essay, by YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS, on various occasions (which he chooses to touch upon in the slightest manner possible, not from an unnatural and affected insensibility, but to avoid imputations altogether contrary to his temper and intentions) encouraged him humbly

\* First printed in the Year 1754.



to hope, that YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS would deign to patronize a work, which, however imperfectly executed, YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS knows to be sincerely intended for the purpose, which You have above all things at heart, The general advancement of Truth, Virtue, and Religion.

Were it suitable to the rank and abilities of the author, it would be very much so to the design of the following work, would make one of the noblest parts of it, and might, in happier times than ours, prove of advantage to those of the higher ranks in life, and, through them, to a whole people; to labour to delineate a character, and hold forth an example, of which there is, in this part of the world, but one Person, that ought not to esteem it an honour to be the imitator. But, to say nothing of the disproportionate qualifications of the writer for so delicate an undertaking, there is but little reason, in this thoughtless and voluptuous age, to expect any very great and extensive good effects from proposing to general imitation the most amiable and perfect model. For, alas, to admire is one thing, and to emulate, another: And it is even to be doubted, whether YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS has influence enough to change the fashion in favour of virtue and religion. While a continual round of idle and expensive amusements fills up the bulk of our time,

and

## DEDICATION.

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and is looked upon as the very dignity of high life ; while the rage of gaming is carried to an excess beyond example, so that even the sacred day of rest brings no rest from that endless drudgery, and children in their non-age are, to the disgrace of common sense, initiated by masters hired for the purpose, and furnished with printed systems of the liberal science of card-playing ; while the grand study of people of rank is, How to drown thought ; while such is the genius of the age, what hope is there, that the retired and unaffected virtues, which dazzle not the common eye, and appear in their true excellence only to Him, who sees not as man sees, should allure the unthinking to imitation ! But when the fluttering tribe, who form the croud at routs and masquerades, are gone down to the silent grave, and have entered upon a state, where they will find, amusement was not the end of their creation ; then will the honours of the Best of Consorts, and of Parents, shine conspicuous on the roll of fame, the delight of a wiser race, and have a place among the celebrated names of *Arria, Cornelia, Porcia, Marcia, Attia, Aurelia*, and others, the glory of the amiable sex, whose charms, other than of paint, or dress, or ostentation, will ever bloom with unfading splendor.

Proceed,

Proceed, ILLUSTRIOUS PRINCESS! Continue Your pious cares in forming Your lovely Offspring to virtue and to glory. The same superior prudence, which has enabled You, in a country, where licentiousness of speech is considered by the people as one of their most valuable privileges, to sustain a character of such dignity, that malice itself, struck silent, stands awed by native goodness, and unaffected greatness of mind; the same Divine support, which has saved You from sinking under that affliction, which to a delicate spirit must have been beyond expression severe; the same inspiring Grace, which has formed Your rising family so perfectly to Your wishes, that regularity and piety are not only their practice, but their pleasure; the same all-ruling Providence, whose peculiar care YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS has ever been, will bring your worthy labours to a happy issue. There is not a virtue, You can establish in the mind of any of Your numerous race, that may not hereafter give happiness to a kingdom. Every spark of goodness kindled by Your care, and nourished by the breath of Heaven, may shine a propitious star on *Europe*. And the concentrated glories of the whole, will, in the higher regions, shed such splendors on Your future elevation, that You will forget, there ever was a time when You was the most amiable and admired character in this obscure world.

To

DEDICATION. vii

TO YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS, who knows that the same Divine authority, which has given to those, who turn many to righteousness, ground to hope, that they shall hereafter shine as stars for ever and ever, has also taught us, that they, who have laboured the most for the general advancement of virtue, are still to consider themselves as unprofitable servants, having done only what they ought; to YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS, nothing, that is here said, will appear otherwise, than as a sett of thoughts naturally flowing from the artless pen of a writer, independent in temper, and happy in the prospect of passing his days in a private and useful station; but warmed with the idea of uncommon excellence, and the hope of extensive advantage to mankind, from the pious labours of the Best of Princesses.

That the mild and gentle reign of the most venerable of Monarchs, the Father of his people, may be long and prosperous, and that He may be blessed, of the King of kings, in his person and family; That public and private Virtue, and true Religion, may yet again raise their drooping heads; That Luxury, Infidelity, Corruption, and Perjury may sink to the regions of darkness, whence they first arose, and that Heaven may again smile propitious on these once highly favoured

favoured nations; That the inestimable life of YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS may be long preserved, as a blessing to your family, and in them to mankind, and that your noble example may be more studied and imitated; That His Royal Highness the Prince of *Wales*, and the other Branches of your illustrious house, may be the peculiar care of Heaven, a blessing to the world, and a crown of glory to YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS; are the unfeigned wishes of one, whom ambition would never have prompted (though your gracious goodness has) to aspire to the honour of subscribing himself thus publicly,

(May it please YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS)

YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS'S

Most devoted and

Most faithful humble servant,

JAMES BURGH.

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THE  
DIGNITY  
OF  
HUMAN NATURE.

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BOOK I.  
OF PRUDENCE.

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INTRODUCTION.

**T**O shew what is truly great, ornamental,  
or useful, in life; to call the attention  
of mankind to objects worthy of their regard as  
rational and immortal beings; to give a brief  
but comprehensive account of the certain and  
established means for attaining the true end of  
our existence, happiness in the present and fu-  
ture states; is the design of the following essay.

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The motives, which engaged the author to attempt a task confessedly too arduous for any single hand, were such as to him seemed sufficient to justify his aspiring, where even a failure, if not too shameful, must deserve praise; as, encouragements from persons, for whom he joins with all mankind in having the most profound regard and veneration; the candor he has, in some more inconsiderable attempts, met with from the public; the hope of receiving improvement to himself from digesting and compiling such a work, and from the opinion of the judicious upon it: These several considerations had deservedly their respective influence. But what rendered the attempt more proper and necessary, was a direct view to the advantage of some young persons, in other parts of the world, as well as *England*, with whom his connexions are such as to give them a right to the fruit of his best abilities in the literary kind; and who will not probably fail to pay a peculiar regard to whatever comes from him.

To exhibit a comprehensive idea of the true dignity of human nature, it will be necessary to consider what is fit for a being who at present inhabits a perishing body, itself an immortal spirit; for a creature capable of action, of making himself and others happy in this world, and of being rewarded and punished hereafter according to his conduct; for a nature fitted for social virtue,

## HUMAN NATURE. 3

tue, and brought into existence to be prepared for glory and happiness.

It is necessary, in order to a man's filling properly his place in society, that he regulate his conduct by the laws of prudence and virtue. To answer the Divine intention in furnishing him with rational faculties, it is evidently proper, that he labour to improve those faculties with knowledge. And in order to his gaining the favour of the supreme Governor of the world, upon which alone the happiness of all created beings depends, it is plain, that obedience to his laws is indispensably necessary, which comprehends religion, natural and revealed. The dignity of human nature may then be exhibited under the four following heads, *viz.*

- I. PRUDENCE, or such a conduct with respect to secular affairs, as is proper in itself, and suitable to respective circumstances, and naturally tends to make a man happy in himself, and useful in society.
- II. KNOWLEDGE, or the improvement and enlargement of the faculties of the mind, as understanding, memory, and imagination.
- III. VIRTUE, or a conformity of disposition and practice to rectitude, in all respects, as to ourselves, our fellow-creatures, and our Maker.

#### 4 THE DIGNITY OF

- IV. REVEALED RELIGION, or a due enquiry into, and proper regard to, any express revelation, which the supreme Being may have given to mankind.

The business of life is serious not ludicrous. No order of beings (especially of rationals) was brought into existence wholly for pleasure and amusement; but to fill some useful place, and answer some important end in the extensive scheme of the beneficent Creator. It is therefore evidently the interest, the wisdom, and the perfection of every rational creature to look to it, that he perform properly the duty of his appointed station; and in that he will in the end find his glory and his happiness.

To give a brief view of what is principally necessary to the dignity of human nature, it seems most methodical to address the following directions chiefly to those readers, who have not yet gone far in life, but are at the same time arrived at an age capable of improving by proper helps, and a due attention to their own interest, when faithfully pointed out to them. Proceeding, from the first setting out in manly life, to the subjects of marriage and education of children, and to the conduct of more advanced age; all the stages of life may be taken in, and the true dignity of each pointed out.

That in the following essay there will of course be wanting a number of particulars more or less conducive to the dignity of our nature, is no more than

## HUMAN NATURE. 5

than may be expected in a design so extensive. If it be found, that whoever conforms to these directions, and frames his character according to the following plan, will have attained the most considerable part of the perfection of human life; it will be acknowledged by the candid and ingenuous, that the throwing together into one view such a number of particulars of principal importance, was attempting a service useful to the public.

As young people have a prospect (though a precarious one) of living to old age, it is of consequence, that they be early put upon such courses, as will be likely to render their passage through life, whether longer or shorter, easy and comfortable. A person's setting out with proper dignity is of great importance toward his future prosperity; as on the contrary, one false step at the first entrance into life may prove irretrievable. Mankind fix their attention upon the behaviour of a person just setting out, and according to the prudence, or want of judgment, they observe in the first steps he takes, pronounce (too precipitately indeed) upon the whole of his future conduct. Men, in active stations especially, ought to consider, that, at their first entrance into life, they will have the ill-will and envy of many rivals and competitors to encounter; and ought to remember, that it will require no ordinary degree of sagacity to defeat the designs of those, who think themselves

B 3 interested

## 6 THE DIGNITY OF

interested to make a bad use of every miscarriage.

To this end there is nothing so indispensably necessary as prudence, or a turn of mind, which puts a person upon looking forward, and enables him to judge rightly of the consequences of his behaviour, so as to avoid the misfortunes into which rashness precipitates many, and to gain the ends which a wise and virtuous man ought to pursue.

It is evident to the meanest understanding, that there is a fitness or unfitness, a suitability or unsuitableness of things to one another, which is not to be changed, without some change presupposed in the things, or their circumstances. Prudence is the knowledge and observance of this propriety of behaviour to times and circumstances, and probable consequences, according to their several varieties.

A turn to prudence is, like all the other endowments of the mind, a natural gift bestowed more or less liberally upon different persons. Some give promises of sagacity and coolness of judgment almost from their infancy; and others never arrive at the mature exercise of foresight or reflexion, but, in spite of the experience of many years, seem children to the last. At the same time, this faculty is capable of great improvements in almost the weakest heads; could they but be brought to bestow a little thought  
and

## HUMAN NATURE. 7

and attention, and to listen to reason, more than to passion.

Imprudent conduct may be owing to a person's want of opportunity for knowing the propriety of behaviour, which is the case of young and unexperienced persons, who have not been long enough in the world to know it; and of rustics, academics, and recluses, who, though they have lived long enough, have not lived among mankind, so as to acquire a due knowledge of them.

Imprudence is also often owing to some unhappy turn of mind, which gives a cast to people's behaviour contrary to their better knowledge. Of this kind are false modesty, indolence, and propensities to particular follies and vices.

Rashness is a great enemy to prudence. The natural vivacity and warmth of youth, and of people of sanguine tempers, makes this folly very conspicuous in them. It is remarkable, that in most points of decorum the female sex have the advantage of us. This cannot be owing either to any difference in natural abilities, or to greater experience, or knowledge of the world; but to the natural timidity of their tempers, joined with the delicacy of their education, which prevents their behaving in the forward and precipitate manner we often do, to the disparagement of our prudence, and the disappointment of our designs. The prejudices occasioned by evil habits, and by pride and passion, contribute



### § THE DIGNITY OF

greatly to the blinding of human reason, and misleading men into imprudent conduct. Of which in their respective places. To give one's self up to be led by popular prejudice, is as likely a way to be misled as any I know. The multitude judge almost constantly wrong on all subjects that lie in the least out of the common way. They follow one another, like a flock of sheep; and not only go wrong themselves; but make those, who are wiser, ashamed to go right. And yet it is not prudent to be singular in matters of inferior consequence.

That a genius inferior only to a *Shakespeare* or a *Milton*, should not be able to keep a coat to his back, to save himself from starving amidst his poetic fire, at the same time that an honest citizen, whose utmost reach of thought only enables him to fix a reasonable profit upon a piece of linen, or silk, according to its first cost and charges, should from nothing raise himself to a coach and six; to account for what in theory seems so strange, it is to be considered, of what consequence it is toward a proper behaviour, that a person apply a due attention to all the minute circumstances, and seemingly inconsiderable particulars, in the conduct of life. Let a man have what sublime abilities he will, if he is above applying his understanding to find out, and his attention to pursue any scheme of life, it is as little to be expected, that he should acquire the fortune of the thriving citizen, as that the plain shopkeeper,

## HUMAN NATURE. 9

shopkeeper, who never applied his mind to learning, should equal him in science. There is no natural incompatibility between wit, or learning, and prudence. Nor is the man of learning or genius, who is void of common prudence, to be considered in any other character, than that of a wrong-headed pedant, or of a man of narrow and defective abilities.

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### PART I.

#### *Of PRUDENCE in Conversation.*

#### SECT. I.

##### *Of treating the Characters of absent Persons.*

**P**RU DENCE may in general be divided into two parts: First, that which regards conversation. And, secondly, that which serves to regulate action.

As to our words, we are to consider, first, whether what we are going to say had better be spoke, or kept in. And the only time for considering this is, before we speak: for it may be too late afterwards. Whatever may prove to the disadvantage of the speaker, the hearers, or of any absent person, is in prudence carefully to be suppressed. Of the first sort is whatever may prejudice the speaker, as by exposing him to prosecution, by discovering his secrets, or by getting

## 10 THE DIGNITY OF

ing him ill-will. Of the second, is whatever may tend to debauch the virtue of the hearers, or, by affronting, work them up to anger and misbehaviour. And of the third, whatever tends to derogate from the character of any absent person. To treat of these without regard to order ;

There is no imprudence more common or universal, than that of detraction. I speak of it at present only as an imprudence, reserving the immorality of that practice to another occasion. And what can be more imprudent, than upon the mention of an absent person, with whom I am no way concerned, to break out into invectives and severities, which may bring me into disputes and trouble, but can answer no good end ?

Did men but consider what opinion the judicious form of those they see delight in detraction, they would, for their own sakes, avoid a practice which exposes them to the contempt of all humane and considerate people. He, who takes pleasure in speaking to the disadvantage of others, must appear to all wise men either in the light of an envious person, who can brook nothing eminent in another ; of one whose mean abilities and improvements will furnish no better entertainment for those he converses with, than disadvantageous representations of others ; or of one who partakes of the temper of an evil spirit, and delights in mischief for mischief's sake. And no  
man

## HUMAN NATURE. 11

man can think it will tend to the forwarding of his interest among his neighbours, to procure himself any of these characters.

The mischiefs a person may bring upon himself, by evil-speaking, either by exposing himself to legal penalties, or to private resentment, and general hatred; are so great, that prudence will direct to speak of every man, as one would do, if he knew, the person, whose character is mentioned, was in the next room, overhearing all that passed. For one can never be sure that he shall not be called upon to say the same things before the person's face, which he has taken the liberty of saying behind his back. And who would be put to the trouble of proving, or to the confusion of recanting his words?

Nor is it enough that what we say to an absent person's disadvantage, be but trifling, or of no great consequence in itself; since what is said in conversation lies wholly at the mercy of the hearers, to represent it as they please; and the mere repetition of what has been said without thought or design, makes it appear of consequence. It is evident therefore that in touching upon what is so extremely delicate, as the characters of others, there is no safe method, but taking the good-natured side (where any thing can be said in vindication), or, if the character spoke of is wholly indefensible, total silence; neither of which is liable to misconstruction.

As

## 12 THE DIGNITY OF

As to putting the easy and credulous upon their guard against the artful and designing, the usual pretence for obloquy; it may be done, without hazard, and without injustice, by anonymous letters in a disguised hand, to the persons we think in danger of being imposed upon, or in any other prudent way; taking care still to treat the character of others, with the same tenderness as one would wish his own to meet with.

It will ever be the wisdom of every person not only to avoid the odious practice of evil-speaking; but to make a resolution to have no concern with those who are given to it. If I find a person takes a pleasure in misrepresenting others to me, I ought to conclude he will use my character in the same manner, in the next company he goes into.

### S E C T. II.

*Of venting singular Opinions. Of Modesty in Disputing. Of being satirical upon the Infirmities of Others. Of Rallying, and receiving Raillery.*

A WISE man will ever be cautious of venting singular opinions in science, in politics, and, above all, in religion, where he does not perfectly know his company. He will consider, that he has ten chances for startling or displeasing his hearers, for one of informing or setting them right, in a single conversation; the bulk of mankind being much too fond of their own opinions and prejudices, to desire to come at truth with

with the hazard of being obliged to give up their beloved maxims.

A man of prudence is always modest in delivering his sentiments, even where he is absolutely certain, that he is in the right, and that his opponent is totally ignorant of the subject in dispute. For, he considers, that it is happiness enough to know himself to be in the right, and that he is not obliged to battle the narrowness and perverseness of mankind.

It is likewise proper to remember, that, in a dispute, the by-standers generally take it for granted, that he who keeps his temper is in the right, and that what puts the other out of humour is his finding himself in danger of being worsted.

A prudent person will carefully avoid touching upon the natural infirmity, whether of body or mind, of those he is in company with. The exposing a person's imperfections to the observation of others, can answer no end, but irritating. We find it hard enough to prevail with mankind to look into their deficiencies themselves; but to set a whole company a gazing at them, is what they will never bear at our hands. When there is a friendly hint to be given, for correcting some failing, if it be done in private, or by an anonymous letter, it may answer the end; whereas the rude exposing of a person's weakness, makes him think

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think himself obliged in honour to defend, and consequently to hold fast, his error.

A wise man will despise the conceited pleasure some hot-headed people take in what they call, speaking their minds, that is, in expressing their dislike of those they fall into company with, in a blunt and rude manner, without the least necessity, or prospect of advantage, and with the certainty of affronting and disoblighing. For he will consider, that tho' he may chance not to like the make of every face he meets in the street, or the humour of every person he falls in company with, he cannot expect either the one or the other should be altered immediately upon his expressing his dissatisfaction, and may expect to have his rude remarks retaliated upon him with interest. As nothing is more provoking to some tempers than raillery, a prudent person will not always be satirically witty where he can; but only where he may without offence. For he will consider, that the finest stroke of raillery is but a witticism; and that there is hardly any person so mean, whose good-will is not preferable to the pleasure of a horse-laugh.

If you should by raillery make another ridiculous (which is more than you can promise upon), remember, that the judicious part of the company will not think the better of you for your having a knack at drollery, or ribaldry.

Before

## HUMAN NATURE. 15

Before you set up for a satirical wit, be sure that you are properly furnished. If you be found to be a bad archer, they will set you up for a butt.

In the case of one's being exposed to the mirth of a company for something said or done sillily, the most effectual way of turning the edge of their ridicule, is by joining in the laugh against one's self, and exposing and aggravating his own folly : for this will shew, that he has the uncommon understanding to see his own fault.

### S E C T. III.

*Of Secrecy. Of the Choice of Company, and of intimate Friends. Of Visiting where there is no Friendship. Of the Company of Ladies. Of Story-telling. Of Boasting, and Lying.*

**A**S to his own private affairs, a prudent person will consider, that his secrets will always be safer in his own breast, than in that of the best and discreetest friend he has in the world. He will therefore be very cautious of imparting them ; and will never let any one into the knowledge of them, but for the sake of profiting by his advice, or for some other useful end. There is not indeed a person among many hundreds, to whom a secret is not an insupportable burden. And the bulk of people are so extremely curious, that they will fall upon a thousand stratagems to make the person, who they imagine is possessed



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of a secret, believe, that they know most of it already, in order to draw him on to discover the whole ; in which they often succeed.

A prudent person will always avoid diving into the secrets of others ; for he will consider, that whoever is weak enough to blab his private affairs to him, is like to put the same confidence in others, the consequence of which may be, that he may come to be blamed for what was discovered by the indiscretion of another, though religiously concealed by himself.

If you cannot keep your own secrets, how do you think other people should ? If you have such an opinion of a person, as to think he will be faithful to you, he has the like of another, and he again of another, and so your secret goes round. You ought likewise to consider, that besides the chance of unfaithfulness in him to whom you trust a secret, or of a difference arising between you, the mere circumstance of his happening some time or other to forget himself, may be the occasion of his discovering and undoing you.

As to the choice of friends or companions, the number of which ought to be small, and the choice delicate, one general rule may be laid down, viz. That a man, who has neither knowledge nor virtue, is by no means a fit companion, let him have what other accomplishments he will. No advantage one can propose from keeping the company of an ignorant or a wicked man,

man, can make up for the nuisance and disgust his folly will give; much less for the danger of having one's manners corrupted, and his mind debauched. Nothing can give a higher delight than the conversation of a man of knowledge. There is in a mind improved by study, conversation, and travel, a kind of inexhaustible fund of entertainment, from which one may draw supplies for many years enjoyment, and at every conversation receive some new piece of information and improvement. On the contrary, the company of an ignorant person must soon grow tiresome and insipid. For one will soon have heard all the tolerable things he can say; and then there is an end of improvement and entertainment both at once.

As for your buffoons, who are the delight of superficial people, and the fiddles of companies, they are, generally speaking, the most despicable people one can converse with. Their being caressed by the thoughtless part of mankind; on account of their pleasantry, gives their manners such a tincture of levity and foolery, that very few of them are good for any thing, but to laugh at. And as a very extensive vein of wit is a great rarity, you will generally find the drolls, you meet in company, have a sett of conceits which they play off at all times, like dancing dogs, or monkies; and that what chiefly diverts is rather some odd cast of countenance, or uncommon

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command of features, than any thing of real wit, that will bear repeating.

The only proper persons therefore, to choose for intimate friends, are men of a serious turn; for such are generally prudent, and fit to consult with; and of established characters; for such, having somewhat to lose, will be cautious of their behaviour. To which add another qualification indispensably necessary in a friend, with whom one would expect to live agreeably, I mean, a good natural temper. Nothing more forcibly warms the mind to a love of goodness, or raises it more powerfully to all that is truly great and worthy, than the conversation of wise and virtuous men. There is a force in what is said *viva voce*, which nothing in writing can come up to. A grave remonstrance, mixed with humanity and compassion, will often awaken thought and reflection in a mind, which has stood proof against the finest moral lessons in books. And the approbation of a friend, whose judgment and sincerity one esteems, will encourage one to go lengths in every commendable disposition and practice, which he could not have thought himself capable of. As on the contrary, a little smart raillery, or a smooth flow of words, put together with an appearance of reason, and delivered with an easy and assured air, may very quickly shake the virtue, or unhinge the principles, of a young person, who has neither had time nor opportunities for establishing himself sufficiently.

I do

## HUMAN NATURE. 19

I do not mean, that young persons are to take upon trust all that is told them by pious people (some of whom may be very weak and bigotted), without examining into the grounds and evidences of what they have taught them, and without allowing themselves an opportunity of hearing both sides of the question. This is more than religion requires; nay, it is directly contrary to what it requires: for it directs men to use their own reason, and not to take any thing of importance upon trust. Nor can any thing be more unsafe than to trust that to another, which I ought to make sure of for myself; which is my own concern infinitely more than any one's else, and where I alone must stand to the damage. My meaning, I say, is not to discourage young people from hearing all sides, and conversing among people of different ways of thinking; but to guard them against the crafty, and the vicious, from whose conversation they will be sure to gain nothing, and may lose dreadfully.

As the slightest touch will defile a clean garment, which is not to be cleaned again without a great deal of trouble, so the conversation of the wicked and debauched will, in a very short time, defile the mind of an innocent person, in a manner that will give him great trouble to recover his former purity. You may therefore more safely venture into company with a person infected with the plague, than with a vicious man: for the

worst consequence of the first is death; but of the last, the hazard of a worse destruction. For vicious people generally have a peculiar ambition to draw in the innocent to their party; and many of them are furnished with artifices and allurements but too effectual for insnaring.

It is the advice of a great man to his son, To keep the company of his superiors, rather than his inferiors. This direction is to be followed with discretion. As on one hand, for a gentleman to associate constantly with mechanics, must prove the most effectual means of sinking him to the level of their manners and conversation; so on the other, for a young person, who is born to no great fortune, and must resolve to make his way in life by his own industry, to affect the company of the nobility and gentry, is the way to have his mind tinctured with the same love of idleness and expence, which even in people of fortune is highly blameable; but in those, who have no such prospects in life, is certain ruin. The supposed advantage arising from the friendship of the great is of very little consequence. The surest way to ingratiate one's self with the bulk of them is, to serve their pleasures, or their ambitious views. A price infinitely too great for all that their favour can procure. It may therefore, I think, be concluded, that the properest companions for every man, are those of his own rank in life.

It has been the misfortune of many in friendship, as in love, to form to themselves such romantic notions of I know not what sublimities

## HUMAN NATURE. 21

as will not answer in real life, and to make themselves miserable upon meeting with disappointments. Whoever thinks to find an object of love, or friendship, in whom, after long acquaintance and familiarity, nothing faulty, or defective, shall appear, must go among superior orders of beings in search of what he wants: human nature will furnish no such characters. He who has found a friend, capable of keeping a secret, of giving a sincere and judicious advice, of entertaining and instructing by his conversation, and ready to shew his affection by actions as well as words; he who has found such a friend, and drops him for any weakness not inconsistent with these qualities, shews himself unworthy of such an inestimable treasure.

As a temper too reserved and suspicious, forbidding the approach of a stranger, is an indication of a crafty disposition, or at least of a timorous and narrow mind; so throwing open one's arms to every forward intruder is a proof of egregious want of prudence and knowledge of the world. Those pert and insinuating people, who become, all of a sudden, and without any reason, the most zealous and sanguine friends, are ever to be suspected of some indirect design. The wisdom of behaviour therefore is to communicate your knowledge to all, who seem willing to receive it; your private affairs only to persons of approved secrecy and judgment, and to them no more than is absolutely necessary; to have many

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acquaintance ; but few intimates ; to open your countenance to all ; your heart to very few.

Never think of friendship with a covetous man : He loves his money better than his friend. Nor with a man of pleasure : He has not gravity enough to render his conversation improving. Nor with a wicked man : He will corrupt you. Nor with a silly fellow : His emptiness will disgust you. Nor with a drunkard : He will betray your secrets. A passionate fellow will affront you. A conceited man will expect you to submit to him in every thing. A mean-spirited creature will disgrace you. A bully will draw you into his quarrels. A spendthrift will borrow your money. A very poor fellow will make your life unhappy. A man of overgrown fortune will draw you into his expensive way of living.

There is no folly more common among young people than that of puffing, or boasting ; at which some are extremely awkward, putting their accounts of their pretended feats together in a manner so inconsistent and contradictory, that their hearers never fail to detect them for mere fictions.

Some will be ever ascribing to themselves witty sayings, which they have heard in company, or perhaps read in books. Some will pretend to have performed things, which if they be challenged to do again, they are obliged to own they cannot. Many, who have never had opportunity

or capacity for study, endeavour to persuade those that converse with them, that they have gone through the whole circle of the sciences, and will pretend to have read every book you can name. Others will be stunning all companies with the great acquaintance they have, and talking of intimacies with eminent persons, whom perhaps in truth they hardly know by sight. And others are guilty of this vice to a degree still incomparably more wicked, I mean, those who delight in blasting the characters of ladies, whose favours they boast, when they have never been so much as in their company. This infamous practice has cost some of these vain and wicked boasters, all they were worth.

The most effectual means I know, for avoiding or getting rid of this foolish habit of boasting, is, To accustom one's-self to speak as little as possible in the first person. The figure Egotism is one of the most ungraceful that can enter into any man's conversation, or writings, though it is to be met with in some of the most eminent both of antient and modern times.

But if it gives a man a disadvantageous appearance to be himself the historian of the actions he has *really* done, what a contemptible light must he appear in, who, in order to set himself off, has recourse to *falsehood*? To what a degree of baseness, must that mind be sunk, which can descend so low as to invent a lye? We see a sense of honour upon this point, often remains in



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the mind when every thing else that relishes of virtue is gone. The town-rake, who will make no hesitation at murder or adultery, will yet take the imputation of a lye, whether just or unjust, for an affront not to be expiated, but with blood. For he looks on other crimes as venial, or perhaps as acts of heroism; but falshood is universally owned to imply in it a peculiar degree of mean-spiritedness. Nor will any man allow himself in this base practice, who considers (abstracting from the vice) the gross imprudence of exposing himself to the universal contempt, which always falls upon the character of a liar, who of course loses the confidence of mankind, even when he speaks truth.

If one has given any just cause of disobligation, the proper part to act, is, frankly to own the offence, and ask the injured person's pardon; and it must only be from excessive pride and obstinacy, that one will refuse what is so reasonable. And how much more manly is such behaviour, than to have recourse to the base subterfuge of a lye, or equivocal evasion?

Falshood is indeed on all accounts inexcusable, and can never proceed but from some unworthy principle, as cowardice, malice, or a total contempt of virtue and honour. And the difficulties it runs one into, are not to be numbered. One lye requires ten others to support it. And the failure of probability in one of them ruins all. The pains necessary to patch up a plausible

plausible story, and the racking of the memory to keep always to the same circumstances in representing things, so as to avoid contradictions, is unsufferable. And after all, it is a thousand to one, but the artifice is detected; and then the unhappy man is questioned as much when he is sincere, as when he dissembles; so that he finds himself at a full stop, and can neither gain his ends with mankind by truth nor falsehood.

As it is common, and natural for young gentlemen to court the company of the ladies, it is proper to give them some directions upon that subject.

It is certain, that the elegance of behaviour, and that universally-engaging accomplishment of complaisance, are no where to be learned but in the conversation of that delicate part of our species. And it is likewise certain, that in the company of ladies there is less to be met with that is likely either to shock, or to corrupt an innocent person, than in the conversation of even the tolerably sober part of our sex. But as on the other hand, it must be confessed, that their being deprived of the advantages we have for enlarging our knowledge, renders their conversation less improving, it must be allowed, that to spend the bulk of one's leisure in their company is not to be justified; nor indeed do they expect it, but, on the contrary heartily despise the effeminate tribe of dangles. A prudent man will therefore only seek the conversation of the ladies occasionally:

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nally ; and, where he does, he will not enter wholly into their manners, but will, by easy and engaging ways, endeavour to draw them into conversation that may be more entertaining to himself, and more improving to them, than the usual chit chat of the tea-table. Nor is a man in any hazard of giving disgust by this proceeding, unless his manner of introducing such subjects have somewhat affected, or gloomy, or overbearing. On the contrary, the more sensible part of the sex always expect to hear from us something different from and superior to the superficial stuff, of fashions, love-affairs, and remarks on neighbours ; and entertain but contemptible notions of a man, who is furnished with no better topics than these. There are many of that sex, who have made so good use of the mean advantages we allow them for improving themselves, that their judgment will be found preferable to that of many men, on prudentials and morals (science they do not pretend to) ; but these are chiefly such as have had the advantage of experience and conversation. The usual trash of compliment and flattery, with which that contemptible order of mortals commonly called fops, are wont to entertain the ladies, is equally shameful to those who utter, and those who receive it. And none but the most superficial part of the sex are to be imposed upon by it ; nor can any thing shew a man in a more ridiculous light, than to be convicted of attempting to flatter, without sufficient

sufficient address to conceal his design. The whole of it is mean and disingenuous, and unworthy of the open plainness and sincerity so graceful in our sex. At the same time, as the ladies are but little accustomed to hear the plain truth, much less disagreeable truths, a man of prudence will avoid contradicting or blaming them too bluntly, knowing, that by such behaviour there is nothing to be got but their ill-will. Toying or romping with handsome women, however distant it may be from any direct design upon them, being yet unsuitable to the delicacy of genteel behaviour, and tending naturally to promote levity, if not to excite irregular desires in young minds, is what I would wish wholly discouraged.

As there is no accomplishment more agreeable in a companion, when people want to relax, than a knack at telling a story; there is no part of conversation, in which men expose themselves more egregiously. The entertainment, and instruction, which companies receive from a well-told story, of which history and lives furnish the best materials, naturally make people desirous of being thought to possess a talent so agreeable. And those whom nature has not fitted out with the proper abilities, cannot miss to execute what they undertake in an awkward manner. The chief of the errors in telling a story, are the following, viz. Tedioufness in dwelling upon insignificant circumstances, which do not interest the company.

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pany. And on the other hand, curtailing too much, and leaving out such circumstances as tend to characterize the persons in the story, or are otherwise essential. Over-running the proper conclusion, or catastrophe of the narration. Over-acting the humorous or lively parts; or drawing on the narration in an unanimated manner.

The most witty and facetious companion in the world may make himself as thoroughly disagreeable as the most insipid mortal that can go into company. Let such a one labour to be witty, and strain for fine things. Let him stun the company with noise and forward impertinence; or let him shew a contempt for them by a sullen silence; and he shall be as heartily despised as ever he was admired.

I do not think it would be easy to invent a sillier custom, than that which universally prevails at present, of visiting where there is no real regard or esteem. There is no keeping up a correspondence of this kind, without being guilty of infinite dissimulation. And they must set politeness at a high rate indeed, who will give up integrity for it. But to consider this matter only in a prudential light, which is the business at present, I should be glad to know wherein appears the wisdom of throwing away time (which one may always apply in some manner agreeable to one's self) upon people, whom one heartily despises. Where interest obliges people in business

to

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to shew civility to their customers, or those they have connexions with in life, there is some pretence of necessity for keeping up such a commerce. But why people in high and independent stations, should think it necessary to spend so many hours in visits, to themselves insipid and disagreeable, is to me wholly inconceivable. When there are so many noble employments, and elegant amusements, to fill up the time of people of figure, it grieves one to see them make themselves useless to their country, and unhappy in themselves, by wasting their hours in the slavery of disagreeable visits, and the endless drudgery of the card-table. To see people of rank descend to such low foolery, as visiting those whom they hate or despise; denying themselves by their servants, when they are really at home, to avoid the visits of those themselves have invited, making pretended visits to those they know to be abroad; and even sending their empty coaches to perform those mock-ceremonies; to observe all this hypocritical farce, carried on by people of high rank, how does it degrade them in the eyes of their inferiors!

## S E C T.

## S E C T. IV.

*Of Swearing and Obscenity. Of Complaisance. Of Over-bearing. Of Passion. Of acknowledging Faults. Of wrangling in Conversation. Of the Importance of Circumstantials in Behaviour.*

**O**NE may lay down the following, as a maxim, which will never fail, viz. That so long as his conversation is entertaining, and behaviour affable and modest, he will be sure to be treated with respect, though his discourse be quite sober and chaste.

Swearing and obscenity are offences not only against all that is sacred, but against all that is polite. They are sins without temptation, without alleviation, and without reward. Swearing is an affront to all sober and well-behaved people. It confounds and interrupts, instead of gracing conversation; as the continual repetition of any set of unmeaning words from time to time necessarily must.

As for obscenity, every one knows it must shock and startle every modest ear. It gives no real pleasure: but on the contrary, if it has any effect, must excite and irritate the passions, without gratifying them, which is pain and torment. If obscenity is fit conversation only for public shews, it cannot be proper among genteel people; and no person deserves the appellation of a gentleman, who accustoms himself to the behaviour

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viour of whore-masters and prostitutes. For it is manners, and not dress that form that character.

If the definition of true good manners, be, That behaviour, which makes a man easy in himself, and easy to all about him ; it can never be good manners to be troublesome by an excess of ceremony, by over-pressing to eat or drink, or by forcing one's favours of any kind, upon those one converses with. Nor can it be said to be consistent with good behaviour to over-do the complimenting part, so as to border upon insipid flattery ; nor does politeness by any means require that we exceed our inclination, or cross our particular taste, in eating and drinking what may be pressed upon us, to our own disgust ; much less to the prejudice of our health or temperance.

No one can be long at a loss, as to behaviour, who observes the two following directions, and is in earnest resolved to regulate his conduct upon them, viz. first, That the way to be generally agreeable in conversation, is to shew, that one has less at heart the humouring his own inclinations, than those of the company, and that he is not so full of himself, as to overlook or despise others ; and, secondly, That the grace of behaviour is to be learned only from the imitation of the judicious and polite.

But care must be taken, that your imitation be not so slavish as to strip you of your natural character



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character and behaviour, and disguise you in those of another, which, being assumed and artificial, will not become you. For nature in ruffet is more agreeable than affectation in embroidery.

There is nothing that costs less, and gains more friends, than an affable and courteous behaviour. One may always observe, that those, who have been accustomed to the best company, behave with the greatest freedom and good nature. People of figure and real worth, having reason to expect that others will treat them with suitable respect, do not find it necessary to assume any airs of superiority. Whereas the vain and conceited, who fancy no submission whatever is equal to their dignity, are ever endeavouring by a haughty carriage to keep up that respect in others, which their want of real merit cannot. But how ill they succeed, is easy to observe, from the universal contempt and disgust such a behaviour meets with among all judicious people.

The truth of the matter is, that the differences between one person and another are, in respect to every circumstance, but that of virtue, so very inconsiderable, as to render any insolent superiority on the one hand, or mean submission on the other, extremely ridiculous; since, according to the elegant expression of Scripture, "man is but a worm, and the son of man a worm."

Nothing

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Nothing shews a greater abjectness of spirit than an over-bearing temper; appearing in a person's behaviour to inferiors. To insult or abuse those who dare not answer again, is as sure a mark of cowardice, as it would be to attack with a drawn sword a woman or a child. And wherever you see a person given to insult his inferiors, you may assure yourself, he will creep to his superiors; for the same baseness of mind will lead him to act the part of a bully to those who cannot resist, and of a coward to those who can. But though servants and other dependents may not have it in their power to retort, in the same taste, the injurious usage they receive from their superiors; they are sure to be even with them by the contempt they themselves have for them, and the character they spread abroad of them thro' the world. Upon the whole, the proper behaviour to inferiors, is, To treat them with generosity and humanity; but by no means with familiarity, on one hand, or insolence on the other.

And, if a fiery temper and passionate behaviour, are improper to inferiors, they are more so among equals; for this obvious reason, That the only effect of a choleric behaviour on your equals, is exposing you to the ridicule of those, who have no dependence upon you, and have neither hopes nor fears from you.

There is indeed no greater happiness than an even natural temper, neither liable to be ex-

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tremely eager and sanguine, nor stoically indifferent and insensible; neither apt to be worked up to a tempest with every trifle, nor yet buried in a continual lethargic stupidity; neither delighting in being always engaged in scenes of mirth and frolick, nor to be wrapped in the impenetrable gloom of a fixed melancholy. And after all, what is there in life, that may be justly reckoned of sufficient importance to move a person to a violent passion? What good grounds can there be for great expectations, for gloomy apprehensions, for immoderate triumph, or for deep dejection, in such a state, as the present, in which we are sure of meeting with innumerable disappointments, even in the greatest success of our affairs; and in which we know that our afflictions and our pleasures must both be soon over. True wisdom will direct us to study moderation with respect to all worldly things; to indulge mirth but seldom, excessive grief never, but to keep up constantly an even cheerfulness of temper.

If it should happen, through inadvertency, passion, or human frailty, that you expose yourself to be taken to task by any one, do not so much labour to justify the action, for that is doubling the fault; as your intention, which might be harmless. Besides, the action appears manifest to every one, so that people will judge for themselves, and not take your notion of it. But your intention, being known only to yourself

self, they will more readily allow you to be the most proper person to explain it. Above all, it is base and unjust, to palliate your own fault, by laying the blame upon others.

Suppose you should fairly own you was in the wrong. It will be only confessing yourself a human creature. And is that so mortifying ! If on the contrary, you should stand it out, people will think you twice in the wrong ; in committing a folly ; and in persisting in it. Whereas if you frankly own your mistake, they will allow your candor as an apology for half the fault.

It is generally pride and passion that engage people in quarrels and law-suits. It is the very character of a good man, that he will, upon occasion, recede from the utmost rigor of what he might in justice demand. If this character were a common one, there would be few law-suits ; which whoever loves, I heartily wish him, for his instruction, the full enjoyment of all its peculiar delights, as attendance, expence, waste of time, fear, and wrangling, with the hatred of all who know his character, and the diminution of his fortune, by every suit he engages in.

If you have reason to believe that your enemy has quitted his hatred to you, and his ill designs against you ; do not insist upon his making you a formal speech, acknowledging his fault, and asking pardon. But forgive him frankly, without putting him to the pain of doing what may be more disagreeable to him, than you can

D 2 imagine.

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imagine. For mens natures are very different. If you already know that he is favourably disposed to you, you cannot know it better by his telling you so in a formal manner. At the same time, it is not necessary, that you trust yourself any more in the hands of one who has endeavoured to betray and ruin you. Christian forbearance and forgiveness are no way inconsistent with prudence.

There is no circumstance in life too trivial to be wholly unworthy of the regard of a person, who would be generally agreeable, on which a man's usefulness in society depends much more than many people are aware of. It is great pity, that many persons eminently valuable for learning and piety do not study the decorum of dress and behaviour more than they do. There is incomparably greater good to be gained by humouring mankind in a few of their trifling customs, and thereby winning their good-will, than by startling or disgusting them by a singularity of behaviour in matters of no consequence. In dress, I would advise to keep the middle between foppery and shabbiness, neither being the first nor the last in a fashion. Every thing which shews what is commonly called a taste in dress, is a proof of a vain and silly turn of mind, and never fails to prejudice the judicious against the wearer. A discreet and well-behaved person, will never fail to meet with due respect from all the discerning part of society (and the good  
opinion

opinion of the rest is not worth desiring) though his dress be ever so plain, so it be decent.

## S E C T. V.

*Miscellaneous Thoughts on Prudence in Conversation.*

**A**S order or method are of very little consequence in treating of such subjects, I will add here a set of miscellaneous thoughts upon the art of conversation, couched in a few words, from which, with what has been already observed, the young reader may furnish himself with a competent knowledge of what is to be studied, and what to be avoided, in conversation. If the reader should find the same thought twice, it is hoped, his candor will overlook a fault not easy to be avoided, in putting together such a variety of unconnected matter. There are few of the following sentences, that will not furnish a good deal of thought, or that are to be understood to their full extent without some consideration.

He who knows the world, will not be too bashful. He who knows himself, will not be impudent.

Do not endeavour to shine in all companies. Leave room for your hearers to imagine something within you beyond all you have said. And remember, the more you are praised, the more you will be envied.

If you would add a lustre to all your accomplishments, study a modest behaviour. To excel

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in any thing valuable is great ; but to be above conceit on account of one's accomplishments is greater. Consider, if you have rich natural gifts, you owe them to the divine bounty. If you have improved your understanding, and studied virtue, you have only done your duty. And thus there seems little ground left for vanity.

You need not tell all the truth, unless to those who have a right to know it all. But let all you tell be truth.

Insult not another for his want of a talent you possess : he may have others, which you want.

Praise your friends ; and let your friends praise you.

If you treat your inferiors with familiarity, expect the same from them.

If you give a jest, take one.

Let all your jokes be truly jokes. Jestings sometimes ends in sad earnest.

If a favour is asked of you, grant it, if you can. If not, refuse it in such a manner, as that one denial may be sufficient.

Wit without humanity degenerates into bitterness. Learning without prudence into pedantry.

In the midst of mirth, reflect that many of your fellow-creatures round the world are expiring ; and that your turn will come shortly. So you will keep your life uniform and free from excess.

Love

Love your fellow-creature, though vicious.  
Hate vice in the friend you love the most.

Whether is the laugher or the morose the  
most disagreeable companion ?

Reproof is a medicine like mercury or opium;  
if it be improperly administered, it will do harm  
instead of good.

Nothing is more unmannerly than to reflect  
on any man's profession, sect, or natural infir-  
mity. He who stirs up against himself another's  
self-love, provokes the strongest passion in hu-  
man nature.

Be careful of your word even in keeping the  
most trifling appointment. But do not blame  
another for a failure of that kind, till you have  
heard his excuse.

Never offer advice, but where there is some  
probability of its being followed.

If a great person has omitted rewarding your  
services, do not talk of it. Perhaps he may not  
yet have had an opportunity. For they have al-  
ways on hand expectants innumerable, and the  
clamorous are too generally gratified before the  
deserving. Besides, it is the way to draw his  
displeasure upon you, which can do you no  
good, but make bad worse. If the services you  
did were voluntary, you ought not to expect any  
return, because you made a present of them un-  
asked. And a free gift is not to be turned into  
a loan, to draw the person you have served into  
debt. If you have served a great person merely



with a view to self-interest, perhaps he is aware of that, and rewards you accordingly. Nor can you justly complain : He owes you nothing ; it was not him you meant to serve.

Fools pretend to foretell what will be the issue of things, and are laughed at for their awkward conjectures. Wise men, being aware of the uncertainty of human affairs, and having observed how small a matter often produces a great change, are modest in their conjectures.

He who talks too fast, out-runs his hearers thoughts. He who speaks too slow, gives his hearer pain by hindering his thoughts, as a rider who frets his horse by reining him in too much.

Never think to entertain people with what lies out of their way, be it ever so curious in its kind. Who would think of regaling a circle of ladies with the beauties of *Homer's* Greek, or a company of country-squires with *Sir Isaac Newton's* discoveries ?

Never fish for praise : It is not worth the bait.

Do well ; but do not boast of it. For that will lessen the commendation you might otherwise have deserved.

He, who is guilty of flattery, declares himself to be sunk from every noble and manly sentiment, and shews, that he thinks the person he presumes upon, void of modesty and discernment. Though flattery is so common in courts, it is the very insolence of rudeness.

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To offer advice to an angry man, is like blowing against a tempest.

Too much preciseness and solemnity in pronouncing what one says in common conversation, as if one was preaching, is generally taken for an indication of self-conceit,

Make your company a rarity, and people will value it. Men despise what they can easily have.

Value truth, however you come by it. Who would not pick up a jewel, that lay on a dung-hill?

The beauty of behaviour consists in the manner, more than the matter of your discourse.

If your superior treats you with familiarity, it will not therefore become you to treat him in the same manner.

Men of many words are generally men of many puffs.

A good way to avoid impertinent and pumping enquiries, is by answering with another question. An evasion may also serve the purpose. But a lye is inexcusable on any occasion, especially, when used to conceal the truth, from one who has no authority to demand it.

To reprove with success, the following circumstances are necessary, viz. mildness, secrecy, intimacy, and the esteem of the person you would reprove.

If you be nettled with severe raillery, take care never to shew that you are stung, unless you choose to provoke more.

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In mixed company, be readier to hear than to speak, and put people upon talking of what is in their own way. For then you will both oblige them, and be most likely to improve by their conversation.

Humanity will direct to be particularly cautious, of treating with the least appearance of neglect those, who have lately met with misfortunes, and are sunk in life. Such persons are apt to think themselves slighted, when no such thing is intended. Their minds, being already sore, feel the least rub very severely. And who would be so cruel as to add affliction to the afflicted ?

Too much company is worse than none.

To smother the generosity of those, who have obliged you, is imprudent, as well as ungrateful. The mention of kindnesses received may excite those who hear it to deserve your good word, by imitating the example which they see does others so much honour.

Learning is like bank-notes. Prudence and good behaviour are like silver, useful upon all occasions.

If you have been once in company with an idle person, it is enough. You need never go again. You have heard all he knows. And he has had no opportunity of learning any thing new. For idle people make no improvements.

Deep learning will make you acceptable to the learned ; but it is only an easy and obliging behaviour,

haviour, and entertaining conversation, that will make you agreeable to all companies.

Men repent speaking ten times for once that they repent keeping silence.

It is an advantage to have concealed one's opinion. For by that means you may change your judgment of things (which every wise man finds reason to do) and not be accused of fickleness.

There is hardly any bodily blemish, which a winning behaviour will not conceal, or make tolerable; and there is no external grace, which ill-nature or affectation will not deform.

If you mean to make your side of the argument appear plausible, do not prejudice people against what you think truth by your passionate manner of defending it.

There is an affected humility more unsufferable than downright pride, as hypocrisy is more abominable than libertinism. Take care that your virtues be genuine and unsophisticated.

If you put on a proud carriage, people will want to know what there is in you to be proud of. It is ten to one whether they value your accomplishments at the same rate as you. And the higher you aspire, they will be the more desirous to mortify you.

Nothing is more nauseous than apparent self-sufficiency. For it shews the company two things, which are extremely disagreeable; That you have a high opinion of yourself; and, That you have comparatively a mean opinion of them.

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It is the concurrence of passions, that produces a storm. Let an angry man alone, and he will cool of himself.

It is but seldom, that very remarkable occurrences fall out in life. The evenness of your temper, will be in most danger of being troubled by trifles which take you by surprize.

It is as obliging in company, especially of superiors, to listen attentively, as to talk entertainingly.

Don't think of knocking out another person's brains, because he differs in opinion from you. It will be as rational to knock yourself on the head, because you differ from yourself ten years ago.

If you want to gain any man's good opinion, take particular care how you behave, the first time you are in company with him. The light you appear in at first, to one who is neither inclinable to think well nor ill of you, will strongly prejudice him either for or against you.

Good humour is the only shield to keep off the darts of the satirical railer. If you have a quiver well-stored, and are sure of hitting him between the joints of the harness, do not spare him. But you had better not bend your bow than miss your aim.

The modest man is seldom the object of envy.

In the company of ladies, do not labour to establish learned points by long-winded arguments,

ments. They do not care to take much pains about finding out truth.

Talkativeness in some men proceeds from what is extremely amiable, I mean, an open, communicative temper. Nor is it an universal rule, that whoever talks much, must say a great deal not worth hearing. I have known men who talked freely, because they had a great deal to say, and delighted in communicating for their own advantage, and that of the company; and I have known others, who commonly sat dumb, because they could find nothing to say. In *England*, we blame every one who talks freely, let his conversation be ever so entertaining and improving. In *France*, they look upon every man as a gloomy mortal, whose tongue does not make an uninterrupted noise. Both these judgments are unjust.

If you talk sentences, do not at the same time give yourself a magisterial air in doing it. An easy conversation is the only agreeable one, especially in mixed company.

Be sure of the fact, before you lose time in searching for a cause.

If you have a friend that will reprove your faults and foibles, consider, you enjoy a blessing, which the king upon the throne cannot have.

In disputes upon moral or scientific points, ever let your aim be to come at truth, not to conquer your opponent. So you never shall be  
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at a loss, in losing the argument, and gaining a new discovery.

What may be very entertaining in company with ignorant people, may be tiresome to those who know more of the matter.

There is no method more likely to cure passion and rashness, than the frequent and attentive consideration of one's own weaknesses. This will work into the mind an habitual sense of the need one has of being pardoned, and will bring down the swelling pride and obstinacy of heart, which are the cause of hasty passion.

If you happen into company, where the talk runs into party, obscenity, scandal, folly, or vice of any kind, you had better pass for morose or unsocial, among people whose good opinion is not worth having, than shock your own conscience, by joining in conversation which you must disapprove of.

If you would have a right account of things from illiterate people, let them tell their story in their own way. If you put them upon talking according to logical rules, you will confound them.

I was much pleased with the saying of a gentleman, who was engaged in a friendly argument with another upon a point in morals. "You and  
" I (says he to his antagonist) seem, as far as I  
" hitherto understand, to differ considerably in  
" our opinions. Let us, if you please, try where-  
" in we can agree." The scheme in most disputes

putes is to try who shall conquer, or confound the other. It is therefore no wonder that so little light is struck out in conversation, where a candid enquiry after truth is often the least thing thought of.

If a man complains to you of his wife, a woman of her husband, a parent of a child, or a child of a parent, be very cautious how you meddle between such near relations, to blame the behaviour of one to the other. You will only have the hatred of both parties, and do no good with either. But this does not hinder your giving both parties, or either, your best advice in a prudent manner.

Be prudently secret. But don't affect to make a secret of what all the world may know; nor give yourself airs of being as close as a conspirator. You will better disappoint idle curiosity by seeming to have nothing to conceal.

Never blame a friend without joining some commendation to make reproof go down.

It is by giving a loose to folly, in conversation and action, that people expose themselves to contempt and ridicule. The modest man may deprive himself of some part of the applause of some sort of people in conversation, by not shining altogether so much as he might have done. Or he may deprive himself of some lesser advantages in life by his reluctance in putting himself forward. But it is only the rash and impetuous talker, or actor, that effectually exposes himself



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in company, or ruins himself in life: It is therefore easy to determine which is the safest side to err on.

It is a base temper in mankind, that they will not take the smallest slight at the hand of those who have done them the greatest kindness.

If you fall into the greatest company, in a natural and unforced way, look upon yourself as one of them; and do not sneak, nor suffer any one to treat you unworthily, without just shewing, that you know behaviour. But if you see them disposed to be rude, overbearing, or purse-proud, it will be more decent and less troublesome to retire, than to wrangle with them.

If at any time you chance, in conversation, to get on a side of an argument which you find not to be tenable, or any other way over-shoot yourself, turn off the subject in as easy and good-humoured a way as you can. If you proceed still, and endeavour, right or wrong, to make your first point good, you will only entangle yourself the more, and in the end expose yourself.

Never over-praise any absent person: especially ladies, in company of ladies. It is the way to bring envy and hatred upon those whom you wish well to.

To try, whether your conversation is likely to be acceptable to people of sense, imagine what you say writ down, or printed, and consider how it would read; whether it would appear natural, improving,

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improving, and entertaining; or affected, unmeaning, or mischievous.

It is better, in conversation with positive men, to turn off the subject in dispute with some merry conceit, than keep up the contention to the disturbance of the company.

Don't give your advice upon any extraordinary emergency, nor your opinion upon any difficult point, especially in company of eminent persons, without first taking time to deliberate. If you say nothing, it may not be known whether your silence was owing to ignorance of the subject, or to modesty. If you give a rash and crude opinion, you are effectually and irrecoverably exposed.

If you fill your fancy, while you are in company, with suspicions of their thinking meanly of you; if you puff yourself up with imaginations of appearing to them a very witty or profound person; if you discompose yourself with fears of misbehaving before them; or any way put yourself out of yourself; you will not appear in your natural colour; but in that of an affected, personated character, which is always disagreeable.

It may be useful to study, at leisure, a variety of proper phrases for such occasions as are most frequent in life, as civilities to superiors, expressions of kindness to inferiors; congratulations, condolence, expressions of gratitude, acknowledgment of faults, asking or denying of favours, &c. I prescribe no particular phrases, because, the

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language of conversation continually fluctuating, they must soon become obsolete. The best method of acquiring the accomplishment of a graceful and easy manner of expression for the common occasions of life, is attention, and imitation of well-bred people. Nothing makes a man appear more contemptible than barrenness, pedantry, or impropriety of expression.

If you would be employed in serious business, don't set up for a buffoon.

Flattery is a compound of falshood, selfishness, servility, and ill-manners. Any one of these qualities is enough to make a character thoroughly odious. Who then would be the person, or have any concern with him, whose mind is deformed by four such vices?

If you must speak upon a difficult point, be the last speaker, if you can.

You will not be agreeable to company, if you strive to bring in, or keep up, a subject unsuitable to their capacities, or humour.

You will never convince a man of ordinary sense by overbearing his understanding. If you dispute with him in such a manner, as to shew a due deference for his judgment, your complaisance may win him, though your saucy arguments could not.

Avoid disputes altogether, if possible : especially in mixed companies, and with ladies. You will hardly convince any one, and may disoblige or startle them, and get yourself the character of a conceited

conceited pragmatical person. Whereas that of an agreeable companion, which you may have without giving yourself any great air of learning or depth, may be more advantageous to you in life, and will make you welcome in all companies.

The frequent use of the name of God; or the Devil; allusions to passages of Scripture; mocking at any thing serious and devout; oaths, vulgar by-words, cant-phrases, affected hard-words, when familiar terms will do as well; scraps of *Latin*, *Greek*, or *French*; quotations from plays spoke in a theatrical manner; all these much used in conversation render a person very contemptible to grave and wise men.

If you send people away from your company well-pleased with themselves, you need not fear but they will be well enough pleased with you, whether they have received any instruction from you or not. Most people had rather be pleased than instructed.

Don't tell unlikely or silly stories, if you know them to be true.

There is no greater rudeness to company, than entertaining them with scolding your servants.

Avoid little oddities in behaviour. But do not despise a man of worth, for his having somewhat awkward, or less agreeable, in his manner.

I hardly know any company more disagreeable than that of those, who are ever straining to hook in some quirk of wit, or drollery, whatever be the subject of conversation. Reflect in yourself;

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after you have passed some hours in such company; and observe whether it leaves any thing in your mind but emptiness, levity, or disgust. Again observe, after you have passed some time in the conversation of men of wisdom and learning, if you do not find your mind filled with judicious reflections, and worthy resolutions. If you do not, it is because you have not a mind capable of them.

If you can express yourself to be perfectly understood in ten words, never use a dozen. Go not about to prove, by a long series of reasoning, what all the world is ready to own.

If any one takes the trouble of finding fault with you, you ought in reason to suppose he has some regard for you; else he would not run the hazard of disobliging you, and drawing upon himself your hatred.

Do not ruffle or provoke any man: Why should any one be the worse for coming into company with you? Be not yourself provoked; Why should you give any man the advantage over you?

To say that one has opinions very different from those commonly received, is saying that he either loves singularity, or that he thinks for himself. Which of the two is the case, can only be found by examining the grounds of his opinions.

Don't appear to the public too sure, or too eager upon any project. If it should miscarry, which

which it is a chance but it does, you will be laughed at. The surest way to prevent which, is not to tell your designs or prospects in life.

If you give yourself a loose in mixed company, you may almost depend on being pulled to pieces as soon as your back is turned, however they may seem entertained with your conversation.

For common conversation, men of ordinary abilities will upon occasion do well enough. And you may always pick something out of any man's discourse, by which you may profit. For an intimate friend to improve by, you must search half a county over, and be glad if you can find him at last.

Do not give your time to every superficial acquaintance: it is bestowing what is to you of inestimable worth, upon one, who is not likely to be the better for it.

If a person has behaved to you in an unaccountable manner, do not at once conclude him a bad man, unless you find his character given up by all who know him; nor then, unless the facts alledged against him be undoubtedly proved, and wholly inexcusable. But this is not advising you to trust a person, whose character you have any reason to suspect. Nothing can be more absurd than the common way of fixing people's characters. Such a one has disobliged me, therefore he is a villain. Such another has done me a kindness, therefore he is a saint.

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Never contend about small matters with superiors, nor with inferiors. If you get the better of the first, you provoke their formidable resentment: if you engage with the latter, you debase yourself.

If you act a part truly great, you may expect that men of mean spirits, who cannot reach you, will endeavour, by detraction, to pull you down to their level. But posterity will do you justice: for the envy raised against you, will die with you.

Superficial people are more agreeable the first time you are in their company, than ever afterwards. Men of judgment improve every succeeding conversation: beware therefore of judging by one interview.

You will not anger a man so much by shewing him that you hate him, as by expressing a contempt of him.

Most young women had rather have any of their good qualities slighted, than their beauty. Yet that is the most inconsiderable accomplishment of a woman of real merit.

You will be always reckoned by the world nearly of the same character with those whose company you keep.

You will please so much the less, if you go into company determined to shine. Let your conversation appear to rise out of thoughts suggested by the occasion, not strained, or premeditated: nature always pleases: affectation is always odious.

P A R T

## P A R T II.

*Of PRUDENCE in Action.*

## S E C T. I.

*Of following Advice. Of Submission to Superiors.*

**P**RUDENCE in action is the conducting of one's affairs in such a manner as is necessary and proper, all circumstances duly considered and balanced; and avoiding whatever may be likely to produce inconvenience with respect to secular concerns. Imprudence is seen as much in neglecting what ought to be done, and at the proper time for doing it, as in taking rash and inconsiderate steps.

There is not a more promising sign in a young person, than a readiness to hear the advice of those whose age and experience qualify them for judging maturely. The knowledge of the world, and of the arts of life, can only be attained by experience and action. Therefore if a young person, who, through obstinacy, rejects the advice of experienced people, succeeds in his designs, it is owing to some strange interposition of providence, or concurrence of circumstances. For such a one, entering into life, wholly unacquainted with the difficulties and dangers of it, and resolutely bent against advice, runs the same hazard



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hazard as a person, wholly ignorant of sailing, who should, against the judgment of experienced pilots, undertake to steer a ship through the most dangerous sea in a tempest.

It seems at first view, a very odd turn in human nature, that young people are generally much more conceited of their own judgments, than those who are come to maturity. One would wonder how they should miss reflecting, that persons more advanced in age than themselves, have of course the advantage of so many years experience beyond themselves ; and that, if all other things were equal, the single circumstance of having seen more of the world, must necessarily enable them to judge better of it.

Life is a journey ; and they only who have travelled a considerable way in it, are fit to direct those who are setting out.

Let me therefore advise my young readers, to pay the utmost deference to the advices or commands of those, who are their superiors in age and experience. Old people, it must be owned, will sometimes obtrude their advice in a manner not very engaging. Their infirmities, the usual attendants of age, together with their concern for the wrong steps they see their young relations and acquaintance taking, will sometimes occasion their treating them with what may be taken for ill-nature ; whereas it may be in reality their love for the persons of their young friends, and their zeal for their interests, which  
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warm them. Do not therefore attend to the manner of the advice; but only to the matter of it. It would be of very little consequence to you, if you was going toward a precipice in a dark night, whether you were warned of your danger by a rude clown, or by a polite gentleman, so you escaped it. In the same manner, if a remonstrance is made upon any part of one's conduct, in the roughest manner; the only thing to be considered, is, whether we can profit by it, and the rudeness of the person, who made it, should go for nothing, as one would swallow a medicine, not for its gratefulness to the taste, but for its effect on the constitution.

As to the submission a young man owes to his superiors, as parents, masters, &c. if it were not a duty, prudence alone would lead him to yield it readily and cheerfully in all cases that are lawful. For it is to be considered, that the consequences of refusing are incomparably worse than those of submission; the world being always ready to lay the blame upon the young person, in case of a rupture between them, and not upon the old; and nothing being more to the disadvantage of a young person's character, than the reproach of an obstinate or unsettled turn of mind. It would indeed be impossible to carry on the affairs of the world, if children, apprentices, servants, and other dependents, were to spend time in disputing the commands of their superiors; it being in many cases hard to give an  
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account of the fitness or unfitness of things prescribed, and in many altogether improper. Nor is it less commendable nor less graceful to obey cheerfully, than to direct prudently. No person is likely to command well, who has never learnt to obey.

It will be very imprudent in a young person to take any material step in life, without consulting the aged and experienced, especially, if possible, such as have had experience in his way of life. In one's choice of a friend, for such occasions, smoothness of speech or complaisance is not to be regarded. On the contrary, the most valuable friend is he, who joins to a thorough knowledge of men and things, matured by age and experience, an open, blunt, and honest behaviour; who will rather magnify, than palliate, the faults and imprudences of his friend, to his face, however he may defend him behind his back; and will not, on account of the trifling hazard of disobliging, suffer him to take a wrong step, without making an open and honest remonstrance upon it.

There is one particular consideration, that makes asking the advice of one's friends prudent and judicious. It is, That, if it should so happen, as it often must, in spite of one's utmost precaution, that his affairs should take a wrong turn, he will not only have the less reason to reflect upon himself; but the mouths of others likewise will generally be stopped; as he may for  
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the most part have his advisers at least, from mere self-conceit, to stand up for the prudence of his conduct, which was the consequence of their advice.

You will often find, that in the very proposing to your friend your difficulty, you yourself shall hit upon the means of getting over it, before he has time to give you his opinion upon it. And you will likewise find, that in advising with a friend, a word dropt by him shall furnish you a valuable hint for your conduct, which you shall wonder how you yourself came to miss.

It must be owned, however, that there are cases, in which no man can judge so well what steps should be taken, as the person concerned. Because he himself may know several important particulars in his own affairs, which would make it highly improper for him to follow the directions another person might give, who was not aware of those circumstances. Whoever, therefore, gives up his judgment, and acts contrary to his own better knowledge, in compliance with the advice of his acquaintance, or with common custom, is guilty of a weakness, the consequences of which may prove fatal.

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### S E C T. II.

*Of Method, Application, and proper Times for Business. Of Trusting to others.*

**T**HERE is nothing that contributes more to the ready and advantageous dispatch, as well as to the safety and success of business, than method and regularity. Let a man set down in his memorandum-book, every morning, the several articles of business he has to do through the day ; and beginning with the first person he is to call upon, or the first place he is to go to, finish that affair (if it is to be done at all) before he begins another ; and so on to the rest. A man of business, who observes this method, will hardly ever find himself hurried, or disconcerted by forgetfulness. And he, who sets down all his transactions in writing, and keeps his accounts, and the whole state of his affairs, in a distinct and accurate order, so that he can at any time, by looking into his books, presently see in what condition his business is, and whether he is in a thriving or declining way ; such a one, I say, deserves properly the character of a man of business, and has a fair prospect of carrying his schemes to an happy issue. But such exactness as this will by no means suit the man of pleasure, who has other things in his head.

The way to transact a great deal of business in a little time, and with great certainty, is to observe these

these rules. To speak to the point. To use no more words, than are necessary fully to express your meaning. And to study before-hand, and set down in writing afterwards, a sketch of the transaction.

There is one piece of prudence above all others absolutely necessary to those who expect to raise themselves in the world by an employment of any kind; I mean, a constant and unwearied application to the main pursuit. By means of indefatigable diligence, joined with frugality, we see many people in the lowest and most laborious stations in life, raise themselves to such circumstances, as will allow them, in their old age, that ease from labour of body and anxiety of mind, which is necessary to make the decline of life supportable. I have heard of a tradesman, who, at his first out-setting, opened and shut his shop every day, for several weeks together, without selling goods to the value of one penny; who, by the force of application for a course of years, raised at last a handsome fortune. And I have known many, who have had a variety of opportunities for settling themselves comfortably in the world, and who, for want of steadiness to carry any one scheme to perfection, have sunk from one degree of wretchedness to another for many years together, without all hopes of ever getting above distress and pinching want.

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There is hardly an employment in life so mean, that will not afford a subsistence, if constantly applied to. And it is only by dint of indefatigable diligence, that a fortune is to be acquired in business. An estate got by what is commonly called a lucky hit, is a rare instance; and he, who expects to have his fortune made in that way, is much about as rational as he who should neglect all probable means of living, on the hopes that he should some time or other find a treasure. The misfortune of indolence is, That there is no such thing as continuing in the same condition without an income of one kind or other. If a man does not bestir himself, poverty must overtake him at last. If he continues to give out for the necessary charges of life, and will not take the pains to gain somewhat to supply his out-givings, his funds must at length come to an end, and misery come upon him at a period of life, when he is least able to grapple with it, I mean in old age, if not before.

The character of a sluggard must, I think, be owned to be one of the most contemptible. In proportion to a person's activity for his own good and that of his fellow-creatures, he is to be reckoned a more or less valuable member of society. And, if all the idle people in a nation were to die in one year, the loss would be inconsiderable, in comparison of what the community must suffer by being deprived of a very few of  
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the active and industrious. Every moment of time ought to be put to its proper use, either in business, in improving the mind, in the innocent and necessary relaxations and entertainments of life, or in the care of our souls.

And as we ought to be much more frugal of our time than our money, the one being infinitely more valuable than the other ; so ought we to be particularly watchful of opportunities. There are times and seasons proper for every purpose of life ; and a very material part of prudence it is to judge rightly of them, and make the best of them. If you have, for example, a favour to ask of a phlegmatic gloomy man, take him, if you can, over his bottle. If you want to deal with a covetous man, by no means propose your business to him, immediately after he has been paying away money ; but rather after he has been receiving. If you know a person, for whose interest you have occasion, is unhappy in his family, put yourself in his way abroad, rather than wait on him at his own house. A statesman will not be likely to give you a favourable audience immediately after meeting with a disappointment in any of his schemes. There are even many people, who are always sour and ill-humoured from their rising till they have dined. And as in persons, so in things, opportunity is of the utmost consequence. The thorough knowledge of the probable rise and fall of merchandize, the favourable seasons for

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importing and exporting, a quick eye to see, and a nimble hand to seize, advantages as they turn up; these are the talents which raise men from low to affluent circumstances.

It would be greatly for the advantage of men of business, if they made it a rule, never to trust any thing of consequence to another, which they can by any means do themselves. Let another have my interest ever so much at heart, I am sure I have it more myself. And no substitute, one can employ, can understand one's business so well as the principal, which gives him a great advantage for doing things in the best way, as he can change his measures according to circumstances, which another has not authority to do. As for dependents of all kinds, it is to be remembered always, that their master's interest possesses at most only the second place in their minds. Self-love will ever be the ruling principle, and no fidelity whatever will prevent a person from bestowing a good deal of thought upon his own concerns, which must break in, less or more, upon his diligence in consulting the interest of his constituent. How men of business can venture, as they do, to trust the great concerns some of them have, for one half of every week in the year, which is half the year, to servants, and they expect others to take care of their business, when they will not be at the trouble of minding it themselves, is to me inconceivable. Nor does the detection, from time to

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to time, of the frauds of such people, seem at all to deter our men of business from trusting to them.

There is indeed nothing more difficult, than to know the characters of those we confide in. How should we imagine we can know those of others, when we are so uncertain about our own? What man can say of himself, I never shall be capable of such a vice or weakness? And if not of himself, much, less of another. Who would then needlessly trust to another, when he can hardly be sure of himself?

### S E C T III.

*Of Frugality and Oeconomy. Of Projects. Of Diversions.*

**N**EXT to diligence and assiduity in business, frugality and oeconomy are the most necessary for him who would raise himself in the world by his own industry. Simple nature is contented with a little, and there is hardly any employment, which, if pursued with prudence and attention, will not yield an income sufficient for the necessary uses of life: as, on the other hand, no revenue is so great, as to be proof against extravagance. Witness the emperor *Caligula*, who in a few years spent the riches of the world, at least of the *Roman* world; I mean, the immense treasures his avaritious predecessor *Tiberius* had been amassing for twenty-two years,

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besides the current revenues of the empire ; and found himself reduced to straits, from the most exorbitant riches. Every person's experience confirms this truth, That those pleasures of life, which cost the most, are the least satisfactory, and contrariwise. The noise of balls, plays, and masquerades is tiresome ; the parade of gilt coaches, of powdered footmen, and of state-visits is fulsome ; while the conversation of a wise and virtuous friend, the endearments of a faithful wife and innocent children, charity to the indigent, which none but a good oeconomist can bestow, the pursuit of useful and ornamental knowledge, the study of virtue and religion, these are entertainments ever new and ever delightful. And if a wise man may thus be satisfied from himself ; if the noblest pleasures and truest enjoyments are only to be had in our own hearts, and in our own houses, how great is the folly of mankind, who fly from the genuine, the rational, the cheap and easily-attainable enjoyments of life, in a mad pursuit after the imaginary, expensive, and tiresome vanities of shew and ostentation ! Were the enjoyments which pomp and grandeur yield (supposing them unimbittered with reflexions on their fatal consequences, which will ever be crowding into the mind) infinitely more exquisite than those of virtue and sobriety, which is the very contrary of the truth, a prudent man would take care, in consideration of the shortness of life, how he indulged them

to the neglect of the serious business of life, or to the ruin of his fortune. None but a madman would lavish away his whole patrimony in one season, with the prospect of poverty and misery for the remainder of his days. For he would consider, that a life languished out in wretchedness, or in dependence, would immensely overbalance the pleasure of reflecting, that he had spent one year in hearing the finest music, in seeing the politest company, in eating the rarest food, and drinking the richest wines, the world could afford. Nay, he would foresee, that the reflexion upon past pleasures and gaieties would only render his misery so much the more intolerable. There is not, indeed, a more deplorable case, than that of a person, who by his own folly has reduced himself to beggary. For besides the other distresses he must struggle with, he has the cruel stings of his own reflexions to torture him, and is deprived of the poor consolation of the sympathy and compassion of his acquaintance.

Every person, who happens, by any means whatever, though wholly out of his own power either to foresee or prevent, to sink in the world, may lay his account with meeting no little contempt and ill-usage from the bulk of his acquaintance, and even from those for whom he has in his prosperity done the greatest kindnesses. But when it is known that a man's misfortunes are owing to his own extravagance, people have

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too good a pretence for with-holding their compassion or assistance, and for treating him with neglect and contempt. It will therefore be a young person's wisdom, before he goes too far, to make such reflexions as these; " Shall I lavish  
 " away in youthful pleasure and folly the patri-  
 " mony that must support me for my whole  
 " life? Shall I indulge myself in rioting and  
 " drunkenness, till I have not a morsel of bread?  
 " Shall I revel in plays, balls, and music-gardens,  
 " till I bring myself to a gaol? Shall I waste  
 " my substance in regaling a sett of wretches, who  
 " will turn their backs upon me, whenever they  
 " have undone me? Shall I pass my youth like a  
 " lord, and be a beggar in my old age?"

There is nothing more unaccountable, than the common practice in our times among that part of the people, who ought to be the examples of frugality, as well as of industry, the citizens of *London*; I mean, the usual way of setting out in life. It seems, generally speaking, as if our traders thought themselves in duty bound to go to the utmost stretch of expence which their circumstances will afford, and even beyond, the very first year of their setting up. That a young shop keeper and his new-married wife, whose joint fortunes would not make up five thousand pounds, should begin with sitting in state to receive company, keeping footmen, carriages, and country-houses, and awkwardly mimicking the extravagancies of the other end of  
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the town, before they know how trade may turn out, or how numerous a family of children they may have to provide for; what can be more preposterous? As if the public had so little discernment, as to conclude that people's circumstances were always according to the shew they made. How easy is it for any man to increase his expence, if he finds his income increase? And how hard is it to be obliged, after setting out in a grand manner, to retrench, and lower the sails? It is not indeed to be done in trade, without affecting a person's credit, which accordingly obliges many traders to go on in the exorbitant way they first set out in, to their own ruin, and that of others, who have been engaged with them. In some countries, insolvency, where a good account of the causes which brought it on cannot be given, is punished with death. If the law of *England* were as severe, what the fate of many of the bankrupt citizens of *London* must have been, every one may judge.

The great consumption of private fortunes is owing chiefly to those expences which are constant, and run on day after day, the whole year round. People do not seem to attend sufficiently to the consequences of the expence of one dish, or one bottle of wine, more than enough in their daily oeconomy. Yet the saving of three or four shillings a day will amount to sixty or eighty pounds in a year, which sum saved up, yearly, for thirty years; the ordinary time a man carries

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 the young people to be particularly  
 new schemes or projects. There is  
 a hundred that ever succeeds at all;  
 of many hundreds, that brings their in-  
 any thing, but disappointment and ruin.  
 reason is pretty plain. It requires a great  
 ence to set any new scheme on foot. The  
 of mankind are prejudiced against novelties,  
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and consequently are apt to oppose them. The generality of people are likewise jealous of every scheme, that may any way affect their interest. And many from pure envy take a pleasure in opposing and depreciating every new proposal. The contriver himself is greatly at a loss; being obliged to try various methods to bring his designs to bear; and to lay out a certain expence for an uncertain profit. So that we observe accordingly, whoever projects any thing new in science, in mechanics, or in trade, seldom does more than open the way for others to profit by his ingenuity.

What shall be said upon the subject of pleasures and diversions; in an age, in which all ranks, sexes, and ages run to excess in this respect? And yet to make the amusements of life the business of life, is absurd in any rational being, who has ever heard of a judgment to come, and who is not absolutely certain (which I believe hardly any one will pretend), that he never shall be called to give an account of the use he has made of his time. But if there be an absurdity greater than another, it is, That a man of business should set up for a man of taste in pleasures. Yet we see the public diversions of this great city crowded and supported chiefly by the citizens. We see those whose business is in town, outvying one another in the elegance of their country-houses; plays, balls, operas, music-gardens, concerts, resorted to by the lowest mechanics.

chanics. The consequences of which extravagancies are bankruptcies innumerable, not to mention frauds, robberies, forgeries, and so forth. It is no easy matter to support a family in the most frugal way; but when to the ordinary conveniencies of life, the above extravagancies are to be added, there is no end of it. And the covetousness of a spendthrift is incomparably more mischievous than that of a miser. The latter will at worst only grind the face of the poor, and take the advantage of all that are less cunning than himself. But the former will not stick at forgery, robbery, or murder.

At the same time, that it is hardly possible to say too much against the inordinate pursuit of diversions, which even defeats its own end, becoming, through excess, a burden and fatigue, instead of a relaxation; after all, I say, that may be urged against this reigning folly of our times, I know no just reason why a man of business should deny himself the moderate use of such innocent amusements, as his fortune or leisure will allow; his fortune, in a consistency with supporting his family, and contributing to the relief of the indigent, and his leisure, in a consistency with the thorough knowledge of the state of his own affairs, and doing offices of kindness to those about him. Some of the most innocent amusements I know, are reading, viz. history, lives, geography, and natural philosophy; with a very little choice poetry; the conversation

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tion of a few agreeable friends; and drawing, where there is a genius for it. To these may be added, riding on horseback once or twice in a week, where it can be done conveniently.

Music is never safely indulged, where there is too great a desire to excel in it; for that generally draws people into an expence of time and money, above what the accomplishment, carried to the greatest length, is worth.

As for cards and all other ways of gaming, they are the ruin of rational conversation, the bane of society, and the curse of the nation.

### S E C T. IV.

*Of Over-trading. Of Integrity prudentially considered. Of Credulity. Of prudent Conduct in case of a reverse of Fortune. Of the different Characters of Men, and how to apply them.*

**T**HERE is one error in the conduct of the industrious part of mankind, whose effects prove as fatal to their fortunes, as those of some of the worst vices, though it is generally the most active and the ablest men who run into it: I mean, over-trading. Profusion itself is not more dangerous; nor does idleness bring more people to ruin, than launching out into trade beyond their abilities. The exuberant credit given in trade, though it is sometimes of advantage, especially to people whose capitals are small, is yet perhaps upon the whole more detrimental,

detrimental, than a general diffidence would be. For a young trader to take the utmost credit he can have, is only running the utmost risque he can run. And if he would consider, that as others trust him to a great extent, he must lay his account with trusting those he deals with to a great value likewise, and that consequently he must run a great many hazards of his own payments falling short, and that the failure or disappointment of two or three considerable sums at the same time, may disable him from making his payments regularly, which is utter ruin to his credit; if, I say, a young trader were to consider in this manner the consequences of things, he would not think the offer of large credit so much a favour, as a snare; especially if he likewise reflected, that whoever offers him large credit, and for long time, without sufficient security, will think he has a right to charge a very considerable profit upon the commodities he sells him; and consequently the advantage he can gain by them, must be too inconsiderable to make up for the risque he must run. The trader, who gives and takes large credit, especially if he has large concerns in foreign parts, and is not possessed of a very considerable fortune, must be liable to such hazards, and such terror and anxiety, that I should think a very moderate profit arising from trading safely, and within a reasonable compass, much the most eligible. I know but one sort of trade, in which  
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large credit might be safely taken, viz. where one could quickly make sales of large quantities of goods for ready money. And in such a trade, to take credit, when one might buy to greater advantage for ready money, would be very absurd.

There is no subject, which men of business ought to have oftner in their view, than the precariousness of human affairs. In order to the success of any scheme, it is necessary, that every material circumstance take place; as in order to the right going of a watch or clock, it is necessary, that every one of the wheels be in order. To succeed in trade, it is necessary, that a man be possessed of a large capital; that he be well qualified (which alone comprehends a great many particulars); that his integrity be unsuspected; that he have no enemies to blast his credit; that foreign and home-markets keep nearly according to his expectations; that those he deals with, and credits to any great extent, be both as honest and as sufficient as he believes them to be; that his funds never fail him, when he depends on them; and that, in short, every thing turn out to his expectation. But surely it must require a very great degree of that sanguine temper so common in youth, to make a man persuade himself that there is no manner of hazard of his finding himself deceived or disappointed in some one among so many particulars. Yet we commonly see instances of bankruptcies, where a  
trader

trader shall have gone to the extent of perhaps ten times the value of his capital; and by means of large credit, and raising money with one hand, to pay with the other, has supported himself upon the effects of other people, till at length, some one or other of his last shifts failing him, down he sinks with his own weight, and brings hundreds to ruin with him.

Upon the head of over-trading, and hastening to be rich, I cannot help making a remark on the conduct of many traders, of large capitals, who, for the sake of adding to a heap already too great, monopolize the market, or trade for a profit, which they know dealers of smaller fortunes cannot possibly live by. If such men really think, that their raising themselves thus on the ruin of others, is justifiable, and that riches got in this manner are fairly gained, they must either have neglected properly informing their consciences, or must have stifled their remonstrances.

Whoever would thrive in trade, let him take care, above all things, to keep up to strict integrity. If a trader is once known to be guilty of taking exorbitant profits, or other unfair advantages, of those he deals with, there is an end of his character. And unless a man can get a fortune by one transaction, it is madness in prudentials to hazard his whole reputation at once. And even if he could, giving his soul for an estate, would be but a losing trade. But of this more hereafter.

When

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When it happens that one is solicited to lend money, or interpose his credit for any person in difficulties, the right way is, to make sure either that the sum furnished or engaged for, be such as he can lay his account with losing, without any material detriment to his affairs; or that he have an unexceptionable security in his hands. The consequences of lending money, or being security for others, generally prove the loss of both money and friend. For people are commonly at the last pinch, when they come to borrowing, and it is not an inconsiderable sum that will keep them from sinking. And the demand of payment seldom fails to occasion disgust between friends. The best method I know for supporting a man of merit in distress, is for a set of three or four, or more, according to the occasion, to contribute conjunctly, so that the loss being divided, if it should prove a loss, may not prove fatal to any one concerned. And if in this, or any other prudent way, one can do a service in a time of need to a person of merit, one ought always to rejoice in the opportunity, and he will be highly to blame who neglects it. But as there is infinite craft and knavery among mankind, let me advise young people to beware of the common weakness, that period of life is generally subject to, I mean, credulity. The most open-hearted are the most liable to be imposed upon by the designing; though one would think a man's knowing his own intentions to be sincere  
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and honest, should be no reason for his concluding every one he meets to be of the same character.

There is no certain method of avoiding the snares of the crafty. But it would be a good custom, if men of business made it their usual practice, in all their dealings where it is practicable, to draw up in writing a minute or memorial of every transaction, subscribed by both; with a clause signifying, that, in case of any difference, they should both agree to submit the matter to arbitration. For it is very common for a designing person in making an agreement, to take no notice of the reasonable and natural consequences of an advantageous concession; but to put off the person he wants to take an advantage of, with a general phrase, as *We shan't fall out; I assure you, I mean you well; I won't wrong you*: and such like. And when accounts come to be settled, and the party, who thinks himself aggrieved, declares, that he made the bargain altogether with the prospect of having such and such advantages allowed him; *No*, says the sharper, *I never told you I would*. Though it is the very same to all intents and purposes of deceiving, as if he had expressly consented to it, yet the unhappy sufferer must sit down with the loss, because he can only say he was deceived by insinuations, and not by a direct fraud within the reach of the law. One cannot therefore be too exact in making contracts; nor is there indeed



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any safety in dealing with deceitful and avaritious people, though one thinks he uses the utmost precaution.

It will, I believe, generally be found of good use, in order to understand the real sentiments of mankind, and to discover when they have any indirect design, to observe carefully their looks. There is something in knavery, that will hardly bear the inspection of a piercing eye. And you will generally observe in a sharper an unsteady and confused look. And if a person is persuaded of the uncommon sagacity of one he is to appear before, he will hardly be able to muster up enough of impudence and artifice, to bear him through without faltering. It will therefore be a good way to try one whom you suspect of a design upon you, by fixing your eyes upon his, and by bringing up a supposition of your having to do with one whose integrity you suspected, and what you would do in such a case. If the person you are talking with, be really what you suspect, he will hardly be capable of keeping his countenance.

One ought always to suspect men remarkably avaritious. Great love of money is a great enemy to honesty. The aged are more dangerous than young people. They are more desirous of gain, and know more indirect ways of coming at it, and of outwitting others, than the young. It will be your wisdom to be cautious of all such ; and of those, who in an affected manner  
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bring in religion on all occasions, in season and out of season; of all smooth and fawning people; of those who are very talkative, and who, in dealing with you, endeavour to draw off your attention from the point in hand, by a number of incoherent reflexions introduced at random; and of the extremely suspicious; for it is generally owing to a consciousness of a designing temper, that people are apt to suspect others. If ever you hear a person boast of his having got any exorbitant advantage in his dealings, you may, generally speaking, conclude such a one not too rigorously honest. It is seldom that a great advantage is to be got, but there must be great disadvantage on the other side. And whoever triumphs in his having got by another's loss, you may easily judge of his character.

There is a sort of people in the world, of whom the young and unexperienced stand much in need to be warned. They are the sanguine promisers. They may be divided into two sorts. The first are those, who, from a foolish custom of fawning upon all those they come into company with, have learned a habit of promising to do great kindnesses, which they have no thought of performing. The other are a sort of warm people, who, while they are lavishing away their promises, have really some thoughts of doing what they engage for. But afterwards, when the time of performance comes, the sanguine fit being gone off, the trouble or expence appears

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in another light ; the promiser cools, and the expectant is bubbled, and perhaps greatly injured by the disappointment.

When it so happens, as it will often unavoidably, in spite of the greatest wisdom, and the strictest integrity of conduct, that a man of business has reason to think he cannot long stand it ; but must make a stop of payments ; it will be his wisdom to call together his creditors ; to let them know the state of his affairs, before they come to the worst ; and gain, by an honest and full surrender of all, that forbearance and favour, which are always readily granted on such occasions. The longer a bad affair of that kind goes on, it grows the worse ; the constant expence of living diminishes the funds ; the accounts become the more involved ; and more and more bad debts sink the value of the unfortunate man's estate. Nor is such a misfortune so extremely formidable, where a trader can make it appear, that neither gross mismanagement nor indirect conduct have occasioned it. On the contrary, it has often happened, that a trader has, by shewing a singular degree of honesty and disinterestedness on such an occasion, so won the compassion and esteem of his creditors, that they have not only allowed him time to make up his affairs, but have even given him such encouragement, and done him such kindnesses, as have enabled him to raise himself, by his industry, to circumstances he was not likely ever to have arrived at.

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If a trader will flounder on from misfortune to misfortune, in hopes of getting clear by some lucky hit, he must be content to take the consequences; but prudence will direct to build no expectations on any scheme, for the success of which one has not many different probabilities, in case of the failure of one or two.

In case of bankruptcy, or otherwise, when an unfortunate trader, through the lenity of his creditors, is discharged, on giving up his effects, and paying as far as they will go, there is not the least pretence for questioning, whether he is obliged to make up the deficiency, if ever it should be in his power. If every man is in justice obliged to make full payment of all he owes, there is no doubt but in this case there is the same obligation, or rather indeed a stronger; because the creditors have quitted part of what they had a legal claim to, and have thereby laid him under an obligation to do them justice, if ever it should be in his power.

The success of business being so extremely precarious, it is a very considerable part of prudence, to take care what sort of people one is concerned with. One would not choose to take credit of an avaritious and cruel man; lest it should happen, by an unlucky run of trade, that one's affairs should go into confusion, and one should fall under the power of such a person. Because one could expect nothing from such a creditor, but

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the most rigorous treatment the law would allow.

The knowledge of human nature, the connection between men's general characters and their respective behaviour, and the prudence of using mankind according to their dispositions and circumstances, so as to gain one's laudable designs by them, is a very important part of conduct.

A miser, for example, is by no means a proper person to apply to for a favour that will cost him any thing. But if he be a man of any principle, he will make an excellent partner in trade, or arbitrator in a dispute about property. For he will condescend to little things, and stickle for trifles, which a generous man would scorn.

A passionate man will fly into a rage at a trifling affront; but he will, generally speaking, soon forget the disobligation, and will be glad to do you any service in his power to make it up with you. It is not therefore by far so dangerous to disoblige such a one, as the gloomy, fullen mortal, who hardly seems displeased, and yet will wait seven years for an opportunity of doing you a mischief. Again, a cool, slow man is, generally speaking, the fittest to advise with; but for dispatch of business, make use of the warm, sanguine temper.

An old man will generally give you the best advice; but the young is the fittest for bustling for your interest. There are some men of no character at all; but take a new tincture from

the last company they were in. It is not safe to have any thing to do with such.

Some men are wholly ruled by their wives, and most men a good deal influenced by them ; as in matters of the oeconomy and decorum of life it is fit they should. It will therefore be prudent, generally speaking, to accommodate one's schemes to the humour of both parties, when one is to enter into important concerns with a married man.

It is vain to look for any thing very valuable in the mind of a covetous man. Avarice is generally the vice of abject spirits ; as extravagance often, not always, of generous minds. Men, who have a great talent at getting of money, most commonly have no other ; and you may for the most part take it for granted, that the man, who has raised exorbitant wealth from nothing, has been too much engaged in the pursuit of riches, to mind his own improvement, or any thing besides money.

A bully is generally a coward. When therefore one happens unluckily to have to do with such a one, the best way is to make up to him boldly, and answer him with firmness ; if you shew the least sign of submission, he will take the advantage of it, to use you ill.

A boaster is to be suspected in all he says. Such men have a natural infirmity, which makes them forget what they are about, and run into a thousand extravagancies, which have no con-

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## HUMAN NATURE. 89

to be cruel, deceitful, and fordid. If you know another to be hasty and passionate, you may generally take it for granted, that he is open and artless; and so on. But these rules admit of exceptions.

There are six sorts of people, at whose hands you need not expect much kindness. The fordid and narrow-minded think of no-body but their noble selves. The lazy will not take the trouble to serve you. The busy have not time to think of you. The over-grown rich man is above minding any one who needs his assistance. The poor and unhappy has neither spirit nor ability. The good-natured fool, however willing, is not capable of serving you.

In negotiating, there are a number of circumstances to be considered, the neglect of any of which may defeat your whole scheme. First, the sex. Women, generally speaking, are naturally diffident and timorous; not admirers of plain undisguised truth; apt to be shocked at the least defect of delicacy in the address of those who approach them; fond of new schemes; if frugal, apt to deviate into fordid narrowness; almost universally given to shew and finery; easily influenced by inconsiderable motives, if suitable to their humour; and not to be convinced of the propriety of your proposal, so much by solid reasoning, as by some witty or lively manner of offering it; once displeased, and always cold; if wicked enough to be revengeful, will stick at nothing



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thing to accomplish it. But this last is an uncommon character.

The age of the person you are to deal with is also to be considered. Young people are easily drawn into any scheme, merely for its being new, especially if any circumstance in it suits their vanity or love of pleasure. They are as easily put out of conceit with a proposal by the next person they converse with. They are not good counsellors : but are very fit for action, where you prescribe them a track, from which they know they are not to vary, which ought always to be done. For youth is generally precipitate and thoughtless. Old age, on the contrary, is slow, but sure ; cautious, generally, to a degree of suspiciousness ; averse to new schemes and ways of life ; generally inclining toward covetousness ; fitter to consult with, than to act for you ; not to be won by fair speeches, or convinced by long reasonings ; tenacious of old opinions, customs, and formalities ; apt to be disoblinded with those, especially younger people, who pretend to question their judgment ; fond of deference, and of being listened to. Young people in their anger mean less than they say ; old people more. You may make it up with most young men ; old people are generally slow in forgiving.

The proper time of addressing a person, upon an affair of any consequence, is to be carefully considered. Wait on a courtier, when he, or  
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## HUMAN NATURE. 91

any friend, whose interest he espouses, is candidate for some place or preferment. He will not then venture to give you a flat denial (however he may gull you with promises) for fear you should have it in your power to traverse his design. Or when he has just had success in some of his schemes; for, being then in good humour, he may give you a more favourable reception. Do business with a phlegmatic, slow man, after he has drank his bottle; for then his heart is open. Treat with a gay man in a morning; for then, if ever, his head is clear.

## S E C T. V.

*Of the Regard due to the Opinion of others,  
Of Quarrels.*

**T**HERE is a weakness very common among the best sort of people, which is very prejudicial, to wit, letting their happiness, depend too much upon the opinion of others. It is certain there is nothing more contemptible than the good or bad opinion of the multitude. Other people lie under such disadvantages for coming at our true characters, and are so often misled by prejudice for or against us, that it is of very little consequence whether they approve our conduct, if our own conscience condemns us, or whether they find fault, if we are sure we acted from honest motives, and with a view to worthy ends. But indeed, if it were worth while  
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to endeavour to please mankind, it is naturally impracticable ; for the most part are so much governed by fancy, that what will win their hearts to-day, will disgust them to-morrow ; and the humours and prejudices, which rule them, are so various, and so opposite, that what will please one sect or party, will thoroughly dissatisfy the contrary.

A wise man, when he hears of reflexions made upon him, will consider if they are just or not. If they are, he will correct the faults taken notice of publicly by an enemy, as carefully as if they had been hinted to him in private by a friend. He, who has in himself wherewith to correct his errors, has no reason to be uneasy at finding them out ; but the contrary.

When one has had information of his being ill used by another behind his back, it is first of all necessary to know with the utmost certainty, the exact truth of what was said, and the manner and probable design of the speaker. Otherwise the consequence may be, that, after you have expressed your resentment, you may find the whole was false, or not worth your notice, which last is generally the case. And then you are obliged to own you went too far, so that the other then thinks himself the offended person. And very few of mankind know what it is sincerely and from the heart to forgive, even after the most abject submission.

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He who sets up for forgiving all injuries, will have nothing else to do. He who appears to be weak, will be often imposed on. And he who pretends to extraordinary shrewdness, invites deceivers to try their talent upon him. Therefore a little spirit, as well as much sagacity, is necessary, to be upon even terms with the world.

If you can bring yourself either not to listen to slanders against yourself; not to believe that they were uttered; to persuade yourself that the person who uttered them, was out of humour at the time, or was drunk, or that he did not so much mean to prejudice you, as to divert the company; that he was imposed upon with respect to your character; or that he is to be pitied and forgiven; if you can bring yourself to any of these, you may make yourself easy, and rise above scandal and malice. And if you should make a matter of law, or of life and death, of every idle surmise against you, you will not be a whit the more secure from scandal; but the contrary. Nothing will so effectually keep you under cover from the strife of tongues, as a peaceable disposition, loving retirement and obscurity, and averse to meddling with the affairs of others.

It is very difficult to interfere in other people's quarrels, or concerns of any kind, without suffering from it one way or other. The wisest men are always the most cautious of such interpositions, well knowing how little good is to be done,

done, and what a risque one runs. Even when advice is asked, it is very often without any intention of following it. And the only consequence of giving one's sentiments freely, is disobliging.

The proper temper of mind for accommodating a difference, if one has any regard either to prudence or humanity, is by no means a spiteful, a revengeful, or a sour humour. For such a behaviour will only widen the breach, and inflame the quarrel. At the same time, it will not be prudent to appear disposed to put up with any terms, or drop the affair in dispute at any rate, though that is often the best that is to be done.

When one has to do with a bad man, he may think himself well off, if he suffers but a little by him, and be thankful that he is got clear of him. For such a one will go lengths against a conscientious person, which he dares not to go in his own defence.

It is vain to think of doing any thing by letters toward clearing up a point in dispute. One hour's conversation will do more than twenty letters. They are ticklish weapons, and require to be handled with the greatest caution.

On the present head of differences and quarrels, it may not be amiss just to touch upon the subject of duels, arising from a false notion of the point of honour. True honour does not consist

list in a waspish temper, or a disposition to make a matter of bloodshed of every trifle; but in an invincible attachment to truth and virtue, in spite of fear, shame, or death itself. And if it be better to flatter a fool, than fight him; if it be wisdom of two evils to choose the least; and if the consideration of the atrocious wickedness of throwing away life, and rushing into the presence of our Almighty Judge in the very act of insulting him, without opportunity for repentance, had its due weight with people, one would think they would contrive any way of settling disputes, rather than with the sword. If a person has committed a slight injury against me, where lies the prudence, or the common sense, of giving him an opportunity of injuring me still worse; I mean by taking my life?

I greatly approve the conduct of an *English* officer in *Flanders*, whose example may serve as an universal model. That gentleman, having received a challenge from another, refused to be the cause of the shedding of either his own, or another's blood, cold. The challenger posted him for a coward. He posted the other for a liar. The challenger threatened to cane him. He told him, he would stand on his own defence. The challenger attacked him. He received him with a blow of a cudgel on the head, which laid him sprawling. He recovered, drew, and made an ill-directed pass at the pacific gentleman, who received him on the point of his sword, which ended

ended the quarrel. The gentleman's courage being well known, and the whole affair being public, it was brought in manslaughter.

## S E C T. VI.

*Of Marriage.*

**I**T is one of the greatest unhappinesses of our times that matrimony is so much discountenanced; That in *London*, and other great cities, so many never marry at all, and that the greatest part have got into the unhappy and unnatural way of wasting the best years of their lives in pursuit of a giddy round of vain amusements and criminal pleasures (if any thing criminal can be called a pleasure), looking upon the married state as the end of all the happiness of life, whereas it is in truth, when entered into with prudence, only the beginning. How do we accordingly see our youth go on to thirty or forty years of age, without ever thinking of settling in life, as becomes Christians and members of society, till at last, being sated and cloyed with lawless love, avarice drives them to seek the alliance of a wealthy family, or dotage puts them upon misapplying that sacred institution to the most sordid purposes.

The advantages of early marriage, both to the community and to particulars, and the mischiefs which might thereby be prevented, are not to be expressed. It is therefore my advice to all  
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my young readers, That they enter into the marriage state as soon as they find themselves settled in a likely way of supporting a family. And I can promise them, upon the general experience of all prudent and good-natured men, that, if they make a judicious choice, the only thing they will have occasion to repent of, will be, that they did not enter into that state sooner; and that they will find it as much beyond the happiest single life, as ease and affluence are beyond the narrowest circumstances. Indeed, what can be conceived more perfect, in an imperfect state, than an inseparable union of interests between two persons, who love one another with sincerity and tenderness; who mutually desire to oblige one another; and who can with the utmost freedom unbofom to one another all their joys and all their griefs, whereby the one may be doubled and the other divided? If friendship has afforded matter for so many commendations worked up with innumerable figures of rhetoric, what may not be said of that most perfect of all friendships, which subsists between married persons?

I do not deny, that there are women, whose natural tempers are so unhappy, that it is not easy to live with them; nor that the ladies of our times give themselves up too generally to an idle and expensive manner of life, to the great detriment of oeconomy, and the vexation of prudent masters of families: but it must be owned, at the same time, that the greatest number of



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unhappy husbands have themselves chiefly to thank for what they suffer. If a man will be so weak, as, for the sake of either beauty or fortune, to run the desperate hazard of taking to his bosom a fury, or an idiot; or if he will suffer a woman, who might, by gentle and prudent ways, be reclaimed from her follies, to run on to ruin, without having the spirit to warn her of the consequences; or if, instead of endeavouring, by the humane methods of remonstrance and persuasion, joined with the endearments of conjugal affection, which a woman must be a monster to resist, I say, if instead of endeavouring by mild and affectionate methods to shew her the error and bad consequences of her manner of life, a man will resolve to carry things with a high hand, and to use a woman of natural sense, birth, and fortune, every way equal to himself, as a slave, or a fool, it is no wonder that his remonstrances are ineffectual, and that domestic peace is interrupted, and oeconomy subverted.

It is not the most exquisite beauty, the most sprightly wit, or the largest fortune, nor all three together, nor an hundred other accomplishments, if such there were, that will make a man happy in a partner for life, who is not endowed with the two principal accomplishments of good-sense and good-nature. If a woman has not common sense, she can be in no respect a fit companion for a reasonable man. On the contrary, the whole behaviour of a fool must be disgusting  
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and tiresome to every one, that knows her, especially to a husband, who is obliged to be more in her company than any one else, who must therefore see more of her folly than any one else, and must suffer more from the shame of it, as being more nearly connected with her than any other person. If a woman has not some small share of sense, what means can a husband use to set her right in any error of conduct, into many of which she will naturally run? Not reason, or argument: for a fool is proof against that. And if she has not a little good-nature; to attempt to advise her, will be only arguing with a tempest, or a rousing fury.

If, between the two married persons, there be upon the whole enough for a comfortable subsistence according to their station, and temper of mind, it signifies very little whether it comes by one side, or the other, or both. Nothing is more absurd, than that it should seem of such importance in the judgment of many people, that a gentleman make a match suitable to himself, as they often very improperly call it; by which they mean, that he is in duty bound to find out a lady possessed of a fortune equal to his own, though what he has already may be more than sufficient for supporting the rank he is born in. The consequences of this mercenary way of proceeding, are only the accumulating more and more materials for luxury, vanity, and ostentation; the perversion of the institution of marriage,

riage, which was for the mutual support and comfort of the parties, into a mere affair of bargain and sale; the alienating, or cooling the affections of the parties for one another, by shewing each of them, that the union was not entered into by the other on account of any personal regards, but from mercenary motives only; and the separation, instead of the union, of interests. It is no wonder, that such marriages prove unhappy; and that each should look upon the other as a clog annexed to the fortune, which was the principal object each aimed at, and should therefore mutually wish one another well out of the way.

I do not here mean to insinuate, that every woman of fortune must of course be good for nothing. But that a man in affluent circumstances is much to blame, who, for the sake of adding to an heap already too large, enters into an engagement, to which inclination does not lead him, and deprives himself of an opportunity of gaining and fixing the affections of a virtuous and amiable person, raised by him to a rank above her expectations, and thereby inspired, if she is not wholly void of goodness, with such a sense of gratitude to her benefactor, as must influence all her actions.

On the other hand, nothing is more dreadful than the prospect those people have, who from romantic love run precipitately into an engagement, that must hold for life, without considering

ing or providing for the consequences. Two young persons, who hurry into marriage, without a reasonable prospect of an income to support them and their family, are in a condition as wretched, as any I know of, where a guilty conscience is out of the question. Let a man consider a little, when he views the object of his passion, to whom he longs to be united by a sacred and indissoluble bond, how he will bear to see those eyes, every glance of which makes his heart bound with joy, drowned in tears, at the thought of misery and poverty coming upon her; how he will bear to see that face, whose smile rejoices his soul, grown pale and haggard through anguish of mind; or how he will bear to think that the offspring, she is going to bring forth, is to be born to beggary and misery. If young people considered maturely the fearful consequences of marriage, where there is no prospect of a proper provision, and where the anguish of poverty will be the more intolerable, the more sincere their affections are; they would not run headlong, as we often see them, into misery irretrievable.

It may often happen, that the family and connexions with which a woman is engaged, may alone be of more advantage to a man than a fortune; as on the other hand, it may happen, that a woman of fortune, may be so given to expence, or may bring with her such a tribe of poor relations, as thrice the income of her for-

tune would not be sufficient to maintain. In either of these cases, a man's prudence is to direct him to make that choice which will be the best upon the whole.

It is a fatal error in the conduct of many young people in the lower ranks of life, to make choice of young women, who have been brought up in indolence, and gaiety, and are not possessed of fortunes suitable the manner of life they have been accustomed to. The probable consequence of such matches is great and remediless misery. For such women, having never been practised in the oeconomy of families, are incapable of applying themselves with that attention and assiduity, much less condescension, to the meaner parts of household affairs, which is absolutely necessary, where the income is but moderate. If a young trader's gains are but small, and his help-mate neither brings in any thing to the common stock, nor knows how to make the most of a little, and at the same time there is a prospect of a numerous family of children coming on, with the casualties of sickness, a decay of trade, and so forth, the man, who finds himself involved in such a scene of troubles, may justly be looked upon, as among the most wretched of mortals.

Those marriages, in short, are likely to be crowned with all the happiness this state admits of, where a due regard is had to the qualities of the mind, to personal endowments, as an agreeable

able appearance, and a suitable age, and to prudential considerations ; and where either the one or the other is neglected, misery is the consequence to be looked for.

There is no care or diligence too much to use, nor any enquiry too curious to be made, before one engages for life. In an unhappy marriage, every little occurrence, every trifling circumstance, calls to remembrance the wretchedness of the state, and the happiness one has missed by making an injudicious choice ; as, on the contrary, in an happy union, no accident is too trifling to pass without furnishing somewhat to give pleasure or entertainment, which must be heightened by being mutual. Let young people, therefore, be advised, above all things to be careful what choice they make. And that they may be effectually divested of all prejudices and attachments in favour of any person, whose outward appearance, fortune, birth, or other circumstance, separate from the endowments of the mind, may be apt to mislead them, let them consider the character of the object, abstractly from the glare of beauty, or the lustre of fortune, and then be true to themselves, and act the part which the judicious and impartial approve of.

Let a young gentleman observe, before he allows his affections to fix upon a particular object, what figure and character she bears in the world ; whether others admire her, as well as himself ; especially, whether the cool and judicious, and

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elderly people approve her character, conduct, and all circumstances, as well as the young, the thoughtless, and passionate. The bloom of beauty will soon wither; the glitter of riches, and the farce of grandeur, will quickly become insipid; nor will any thing earthly give peace to the wretch who has taken a serpent into his bosom, whose sting he feels every moment in his heart.

During the time of courtship, though a man must resolve to put on a smooth and engaging behaviour, there is no necessity, nor is it expected by the reasonable part of womankind, that the dignity of the nobler sex should be laid aside, and the lover debase himself from a man of spirit, to a slave, or a sycophant. On the contrary, it is absolutely necessary, if people are resolved to consult the happiness of the marriage-state, to behave to one another in courtship, in such a manner that neither may have reason to reproach the other with having acted a deceitful and unworthy part. For, if mutual love and esteem be the very cement of matrimonial happiness, and if it be impossible to love and esteem a person, who has deceived and imposed upon one, how cautious ought both parties to be, before entering into so close an union, of doing what may tend to lessen their mutual love and esteem for one another?

Nor is there less prudence requisite for preserving the happiness of the marriage-state, than for establishing it at first. When it happens, as  
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it will unavoidably at times, that the husband, or wife, is a little out of humour, it will be highly imprudent for the other to insist upon reasoning the matter out, or deciding the point in question, at that time. The dispute ought to be let alone, at least till some time afterwards, or, if possible, dropped entirely. It may even be proper often to give up a point, and agree (contrary to one's own judgment) to what is advanced by the other; which will shew, that one does not oppose from mere perverseness; but on good grounds.

Again, if one happens to be in a thoughtful, or serious mood, it must be very injudicious in the other to put on a very gay behaviour; and contrariwise. Married people ought to think nothing trifling, or of small consequence, that may please or disgust one another. They ought to watch one another's looks; to study one another's tempers; to fly to oblige one another; and to be afraid of the blowing of a feather, if it has the least chance to displease. For, while the husband consults his wife's satisfaction, he is studying to promote his own happiness, and so of the wife. Cleanliness, dress, complaisance; every little piece of obsequiousness and tenderness; consulting one another upon every trifle, however obvious; commendations of one another's judgment or taste, if expressed with address, and without the appearance of flattery; yielding every point, if possible,



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possible, before there be time to dispute it; these are the arts by which love is kept alive for life.

Too great, and too constant fondness and indulgence will sometimes be found to lessen affection, as it may make the smallest occasional remission, or change of behaviour, be construed into coldness. Even the constant presence of married persons together, where there is no opportunity of longing for the sight of one another, may occasion indifference. So delicate is the passion of love, and so easily cooled!

S E C T. VII.

*Of the Management of Children.*

**C**HILDREN being the usual consequence of marriage, it is natural in this place to say something on the conduct that is necessary for bringing them up to maturity, and settling them in the world.

It is certain, that what very strongly affects the mother, will likewise often produce amazing effects both upon the body and the mind of the infant in her womb. If therefore a man does not choose to have a monster, an idiot, or a fury born to him, he ought to take the utmost care, that his pregnant wife be kept as much as possible from the sight of uncouth objects, and from whatever may terrify her, or ruffle her temper. Indeed the distress a weak woman undergoes in that condition is such, that none but a savage could

could find in his heart to heighten it by ill usage.

The child being brought into the world, the care of its health lies wholly upon the mother. And that mother, who, according to the present polite custom, more barbarous than any that prevails among the brutes, turns her own offspring over to the care of a mercenary nurse, on any pretence but absolute necessity, ought not to be surpris'd, if her child grows up with a diseased constitution, or a depraved disposition, the effects of sucking the breast of an unhealthy or ill-temper'd woman ; or if its tender limbs be distort'd, its faculties stupified, or its days short'ened by gin, opium, or *Godfrey's cordial* \*.

Whoever would have healthy and hardy children, must not only live temperately themselves, but must take care, that their children, especially in their infancy, be kept from all manner of gross food, as meat, and sauces, and be allowed to indulge very sparingly in sweet-meats, but by no means to touch strong liquors. With every bit of the one, or sip of the other, an infant swallows the seeds of a variety of species of diseases. For it being impossible that the stomach of a child should be strong enough to digest what those of grown people cannot, without pre-

\* A common custom with industrious nurses, to quiet the children committed to their care, that they may in the mean time go on with other business.

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judice to their constitutions, and shortening of their days, it is plain, that such substances must turn to crudities, which must mix with and corrupt the whole mass of blood. If a child is never used to indulgence in this respect, he will suffer nothing from the refusal of what is not fit for him. For he will be just what he is made by habit and custom.

From the time a child begins to speak, to four or five years of age, is the proper period for breaking and forming his temper. If that important work is not done within this time, it is, in most children, not to be done at all. For the mind quickly acquires a degree of obstinacy and intractableness, that is not to be conquered by any methods which tender parents can bring themselves to use. And habits once rooted, are not to be eradicated but by very violent means.

Of all the follies, which shew themselves in innumerable different ways, in the conduct of our weak and short-sighted species, there is none that is more general, that goes more extravagant lengths, or proves more fatal, than that which appears in the partiality of fond parents for their children. To love our offspring with the utmost tenderness, to labour, to wish, and to pray for their real good, is, no doubt, our indispensable duty. But to shut our eyes against their faults, or to resolve not to correct them for fear of giving a little pain; to effeminate and enervate  
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their spirits by fondling them; to grant to their importunity what we ought on all accounts to refuse; to hurt their constitutions by indulging them in what is improper for them; to neglect the cultivation of their minds with useful knowledge, through fear of overburdening their faculties; and, above all, to be so weak as to let them know our weakness; if there be any infirmity beyond this, it must be somewhat I have never heard of.

By that time people come to be parents, it is to be expected they should be past the folly of youth, the usual excuse for the next greatest weakness of human nature, I mean romantic love. But we see every day instances to the contrary; parents indulging their children in every wrong tendency, and even delighted with that very obstinacy, and those very follies, which they cannot but think, must one day make both them and their children unhappy; allowing themselves to be overcome by their solicitations, to grant them what they know must prove hurtful to them; and with-holding from them, at their desire, what they know is their greatest good.

A proof of the mischiefs arising from fondness for children, is, That we find by experience, the fools in a great family are generally the eldest and youngest, whose fate is commonly to be most doted on. Those in the middle, who pass neglected, are commonly found to turn out best in life. Natural sons, foundlings, and out-casts,  
often

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often make their way better in the world, by their own industry, with little or no education, than those who have been brought up in effeminacy and extravagance, and with expectations of a fortune; whose education is by those means in great measure defeated.

If you observe your child given to fallhood, one of the worst tendencies that can discover itself in a young mind (as implying a kind of natural baseness of spirit), the point in view must be, to endeavour to raise in him such a sense of honour, as may set him above that base practice. For this purpose, it may be proper to express the utmost astonishment upon the first information of his transgressing that way; to seem to disbelieve it, and to punish him rather with shame and the loss of your favour, than any other way; and if you can raise in him a sense of shame, you will quickly habituate him to take care of falling into shameful actions. A turn to pilfering of play-things, or sweet-meats, is to be treated in the same manner; as is also a disposition to tricking at play, and in purchasing of play-things of others his equals.

To remove out of the way one great temptation to lying, or equivocation (which is as bad), it will be a good method to let him know, he may always expect to be pardoned what he has done amiss, upon an honest and ingenuous confession. For indeed there is no fault a child is likely to be guilty of, that is so bad as a lye, or  
trick,

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trick, to excuse it. Therefore it will be best, before you mention what you have to accuse him of, to put it in his power to save the punishment, by making the discovery himself, intimating, that you know more than he may think of, and that you will treat him accordingly as you find he deals ingenuously with you, or otherwise.

If your son seems to shew a turn to craft, and fly deceit, which appears in some children very early, and is a very unpromising character, the likeliest way to break him of that vice, is by shewing him that his little arts are seen through; by triumphing over him, and ridiculing his ineffectual cunning in the severest manner you can; and by suspecting some design in all he says and does, and putting him to such inconveniencies by your suspicions of him, as may make him resolve to be open and honest, merely in self-defence.

If his bent be to passion and resentment, shutting him up, and keeping him from his diversions and play-fellows, is the proper method of treating him; because it gives him an opportunity for what he most wants, to wit, consideration, and attention to his own weakness, which is all that is in early age necessary to the conquest of it.

If he appears timorous or cowardly, it will be necessary to accustom him by degrees to crowds, to stormy weather, to rough waters, to the sight of counterfeit fighting-matches, and to be handled a little roughly, but without danger

of being hurt, by others of his own age. If his temper seems too boisterous, so that he is always ready to quarrel, and loves fighting for fighting's sake, keeping him among the female part of the family is the likeliest mechanical means I know for softening his manners.

If he shews too much self-conceit, it will be necessary to mortify him from time to time, by shewing him his defects, and how much he is exceeded by others. If he is bashful and timorous, he must be encouraged and commended for whatever he does well.

If a child seems inclined to sauntering and idleness, emulation is the proper cure to be administered. If he sees others of his equals honoured and caressed for using a little diligence, he must be of a temper uncommonly insensible, and of a spirit uncommonly abject, if he is not moved to emulate their improvements.

Lying a-bed in a morning, or passing, at any time, a whole day, without doing somewhat, toward his improvement, if in health, ought by no means to be allowed in a child, who is come to the age of learning to spell. And if he is from his infancy accustomed to hear schools and places of education spoke of as scenes of happiness; and has books (not sweet-meats, play-things, or fine cloaths) given him as the most valuable presents and the richest rewards, he can hardly fail to be moved to exert himself.

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But all this is directly contrary to the common practice of threatening a child with school, whenever he does amiss, of setting him a task as a punishment, and of sending for him from school, from time to time, as a gratification.

A tendency to prodigality in a child is to be curbed as early as possible. For he who will in his youth lavish away half-pence, when he comes to manhood will be apt to squander away guineas. The best methods I know for correcting this bias in a child, are such as these; Encouraging him to save a piece of money some little time, on the promise of doubling it, and, which is to the same purpose, lessening his allowance (but not by any means depriving him wholly of pocket-money) in case of misconduct; obliging him to give an exact account of his manner of laying out his money, by memory at first, and afterwards in a written account, regularly kept; putting in a purse by itself a penny or sixpence for every penny or sixpence given him, and shewing him from time to time the sum; and so forth.

There is no error more fatal than imagining, that pinching a youth in his pocket-money will teach him frugality. On the contrary, it will only occasion his running into extravagance with so much the more eagerness, whenever he comes to have money in his own hands. As pinching him in his diet, will make his appetite only the more rapacious. In the same manner, confining him too much from diversions and company, will



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heighten his desire after them. And overloading and fatiguing him with study, or with religious exercises, will disgust him against learning and devotion. For human nature is like a stream of water, which, if too much opposed in its course, will swell, and at length overflow all bounds; but, carefully kept within its banks, will enrich and beautify the places it visits in its course.

If you put into the hands of your child more money than is suitable to his age and discretion, expect to find that he has thrown it away upon what is not only idle, but hurtful. A certain small regular income any child above six years of age ought to have, and I should think no extraordinary advance proper upon any account. When he comes to be capable of keeping an account, he ought to be obliged to it. He will thereby acquire a habit of frugality, attention, and prudence, that will be of service to him thro' his whole life. On the contrary, giving a young person money to spend at will, without requiring any account of it, is leading, or rather forcing him upon extravagance and folly.

As to a turn to covetousness and hoarding, it is in a child a frightful temper, indicating a natural inclination to sordid selfishness. This being a disposition which strengthens with years, and holds to the last, when it begins to appear so early, it is to be expected it will come to an excessive degree in time. A lad ought to be broke of this unhappy turn, by shewing him the  
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odiousness of it in the judgment of all open-hearted people, and by exposing his churlishness to the ridicule of his equals. Children ought to be accustomed from their earliest years, to bring themselves with ease to quit what they may have a right to ; to give away part of their fruits or sweet-meats, and to bestow out of their pocket-money for the relief of the poor.

A natural perverseness and obstinacy in the temper of a child, it is hardly possible to break after seven or eight years of age, till reason and experience do it, which may never happen. And even before that early period, it is not, in some, to be conquered, but by severe means ; though severity may be used without violence, as by confinement and dieting. When a parent finds himself obliged to come to extremities, the mildest way of proceeding is to resolve to go through with it at once. It is likewise a more effectual method to punish once with some severity, than a great many times in a superficial manner. For when once a child, of a sturdy spirit and constitution, becomes accustomed to punishment, he grows hardened against it, till at length it loses its effects and becomes no punishment. I need not add, that correction, when things comes to the extremity which renders it absolutely necessary, ought always to be administered with coolness and deliberation, and not without visible reluctance, that the child may plainly see, it is not passion in the parent, but a regard to his good, and absolute

lute necessity, that brings it upon him. And, as nothing but a visible pravity of mind is sufficient to make so rough a remedy necessary, so whenever the perverseness or wickedness of disposition, which occasioned it, seems perfectly conquered, it ought by all means to be given over, and a quite contrary behaviour to be assumed by the parent. For, the danger of hardening the temper of a child, by making him too familiar with punishment, is almost as bad as any fault intended to be corrected by it. Confinement, dieting, restraint from the amusements allowed to others his equals, the loss of his father's or mother's favour, and, above all, disgrace, are much the most ingenuous punishments to be inflicted on young gentlemen.

When it is found necessary to inflict disgrace, the utmost care ought to be taken, that the whole family appear to be of a mind. If the father chides, and the mother, or any other person, encourages, what effect can be expected to be worked upon the mind of the child? On the other hand, when he meets with coldness and discouragement from every body, he will find himself under a necessity of amending his manners in his own defence.

To make the young mind the more susceptible of a sense of shame, and to inspire it with sentiments of true honour; youth should be very early taught to entertain worthy thoughts of the dignity of human nature, and the reverence we

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owe ourselves, so that they may be made to stand in so much awe of themselves as not to do a mean action, though never to be known to any creature.

All methods of education ought in general to be directed to the improvement of some good tendency, or the correction of some wrong turn in the mind. And that parent, or tutor, who thinks of forming a rational creature, as he would break a hound or a colt, by severity alone, without endeavouring to rectify the judgment and bend the will, shews himself wholly ignorant of human nature, and of the work he has undertaken. From the time a child can speak, it is capable of being reasoned with, in a way suitable to its age, and of being convinced of the good or evil of its actions; and is never to be corrected without; otherwise you may conclude, that the effect will cease with the smart. A sense of honour and shame, and of the right and wrong of actions, are the proper handles of education, as they lead directly to virtue, and lay a restraint upon the mind itself. Punishment, if not managed with great judgment, and administered rather as a mark and attendant of that disgrace, into which a youth has brought himself by bad behaviour, may have no other effect, than that of persuading him, that pain is a great evil, which he ought not to think, but be taught to despise it. Or it may tend, if overdone, to harden and brutalize his temper, and lead him to

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use others as he has been used. Paltry rewards, as fine cloaths, or play-things, ought likewise never to be bestowed without a caution, that they are given not as things valuable in themselves, but only as marks of favour and approbation. If this be not taken care of, a child may be led to look upon such baubles as the *summum bonum* of life, which will give him a quite wrong turn of mind.

In chiding, or correcting, it will be necessary to take the utmost care not to represent to a young person his fault as unpardonable, or his case as desperate; but to leave room for reformation; lest he think he has utterly lost his character, and so become stupidly indifferent about recovering your favour, or amending his manners. Nor is the recovery of any person under thirty years of age to be wholly despaired of, where there is a fund of sense, and an ingenuous temper to work upon.

A turn to cruelty, appearing in a child's delighting in teasing his equals, in pulling insects to pieces, and in torturing birds, frogs, cats, or other animals, ought by all means to be rooted out as soon as possible. Children ought to be convinced of what they are not generally aware of, That an animal can feel, though it cannot complain, and that cruelty to a beast or insect, is as much cruelty, and as truly wicked, as when exercised upon our own species.

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There are few children that may not be formed to tractableness and goodness, where a parent has the conscience to study carefully his duty in this respect, the steadiness to go through with it, and the sagacity to manage properly the natural tendencies of the mind, to play them against one another, to supply what may be defective, to correct what may be wrong, and to lop off what may be redundant.

Let only a parent consider with himself what temper he would have his son be of, when a man; and let him cultivate that in him, while a child. If he would not have him fierce, cruel, or revengeful, let him take care early to shew his displeasure at every instance of surliness, or malice, against his play-fellows, or cruelty to brutes or insects. If he would not wish him to prove of a fretful and peevish temper, ready to lose all patience at every little disappointment in life, let him take care from the first, not to humour him in all his childish freaks, not to shew him that he can refuse him nothing, nor especially to give him what he asks, because he cries, or is out of humour for it, but for that very reason to withhold what might otherwise be fit for him. If he would not have him a glutton, when he comes to be a man, let him not consult his appetite too much in his childhood; and so of the rest.

It is a most fatal mistake, which many parents are in with respect to the important business of

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forming the moral character of their children, That the faults of children are of little consequence. Yet it is the very same disposition, which makes a child, or youth, passionate, false, or revengeful, and which in the man produces murder, perjury, and all the most atrocious crimes. The very same turn of mind, which puts a child, or youth, upon beating his play-fellows with his little harmless hand, will afterwards, if not corrected, arm him with a sword to execute his revenge. How then can parents be so unthinking as to connive at, much more to encourage, a wrong turn of mind in their children? At the same time that they would do their utmost to rectify any blemish in a feature or limb, as knowing that it will else be quickly incurable; they allow the mind to run into vice and disorder, which they know may be soon irretrievable.

If your child threatened to grow crooked, or deformed; if he were dwarfish and stunted; if he were weak in one or more of his limbs; or did not look with both eyes alike; would you not give any thing in the world to have such infirmity strengthened, or wrong cast of features redressed? Would you put off endeavouring this for one day after you had discovered the defect? And will you trifle with a deformity of infinitely greater consequence, a blemish in the mind? Would you answer to any one, who advised you to a remedy for weak hams, or an arm threatening

to wither; that, as your child grew up, they would strengthen of themselves, and therefore it was needless to take any trouble at present? Why then should you put off using your utmost endeavours, and that as soon as possible, for breaking the impotency of his passions, bettering his temper, and strengthening his judgment? Will you say, that, though your child is now at six years old, fretful, perverse, crafty, given to idleness, lying, and disobedience; it does not follow, that he must be so at twenty or thirty? Why do you not likewise persuade yourself, that he must out-grow squinting, or a high shoulder? You cannot think a short neck, or a wrong cast of the eye, a worse blemish than a turn to falsehood, malice, or revenge? Yet you encourage your son, at three years of age, to vent his spite upon whatever disoblige him, even upon the floor, when he catches a fall. He asks you what you have got in your hand: you do not choose to let him have it; and you have not the courage to tell him so. You therefore put him off with answering, that it was nothing. By and by, he has laid hold of somewhat not fit for him, which he endeavours to conceal. You ask him what he has got: Has he not your own example and authority for putting you off with a shuffling answer? He asks somewhat not fit for him. You refuse it: he falls a crying: you give it him. Is there any surer way of teaching him to make use constantly of the same means for obtaining whatever



whatever his wayward will is set upon? You trick him up with tawdry ornaments, and dangle him about after all manner of shews and entertainments, while he ought to be applying to his improvement in somewhat useful. Is not this teaching him, that finery and gadding are the perfection of life? Is not this planting in his mind with your own hand the seeds of vice and folly? Yet you would turn away a nursery-maid, who should, for her diversion, teach him to squint, or stammer, or go awry.

It is strange, that parents should either be so weak, as to look upon any fault in the minds of their children as of little consequence, and not worth correcting; or that they should not generally have the sagacity to distinguish between those infirmities, which, being the effects of unripe age, must of course cure themselves, and those, which, being occasioned by a wrong cast in the mind, are likely to grow stronger and stronger. Thoughtlessness, timidity, and love of play, which are natural to childhood, may be expected to abate as years come on. But it is evidently not so with a turn to deceit, malice, or perverseness.

I cannot help adding here one advice to parents, which, if it should not be thought over complaisant, is however well meant. It is, that they would take care to set before their children an unexceptionable example. The consequence of a neglect of this will be, that children will be  
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drawn to imitate what is bad, and be prevented from regarding what good advice may be given them. Do not imagine you can effectually inculcate upon your son the virtues of sobriety and frugality, while he sees your house and your table the scenes of luxury and gluttony; or that your affected grave lessons will attach him to purity and piety, while your conversation is interlarded with swearing and obscenity; or that you can persuade him to think of the care of his soul as the great concern, while he sees that you live only to get money.

Those natural inclinations of the human mind ought to be encouraged to the utmost (under proper regulations) which tend to put it upon action and excelling. Whoever would wish his son to be diligent in his studies, and active in business, can use no better means for that purpose, than stirring up in him emulation, a desire of praise, and a sense of honour and shame. Curiosity will put a youth upon enquiring into the natures and reasons of things, and endeavouring to acquire universal knowledge. This passion ought therefore to be excited to the utmost, and gratified, even when it shews itself by his asking the most childish questions, which should always be answered in as rational and satisfying a manner as possible.

It is by habit rather than precept, that a young person is best formed to readiness and address in doing things. If your son hands a glass

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or a tea-cup awkwardly, he will profit more by making him do it over again, directing him how, than by preaching to him an hour. It is the same in scholarship, and in his behaviour to his equals, as to justice and sincerity ; which shews the advantage of a social, above a solitary education. Therefore opportunities of planting proper habits in young people ought to be sought, and they kept doing, merely that by practice they may come to do things well at last.

On this head, I cannot help remarking on the unhappy constraint I have often, with much sympathy, seen very young children put under, before company. The chiding lectures I have heard read to boys and girls of eight or ten years of age, about holding up of heads, putting back shoulders, turning out toes, and making legs, have, I am persuaded, gone a good way toward disgusting the poor children against what is called behaviour. Did parents consider, that, even in grown people, the gracefulness of behaviour consists in an easy and natural motion and gesture, and looks denoting kindness and good-will to those with whom they converse ; and that if, a child's heart and temper are formed to civility, the outward expressions of it will come in all due time ; did parents, I say, consider, these obvious things, they would bestow their chief attention upon the mind, and not make themselves, their children, and their friends, uneasy about making courtesies,

courtesies, and legs, twenty times in a quarter of an hour.

The bodily infirmities of children may often by proper management be greatly helped, if not wholly cured. Crookedness, for example, by swinging and hanging by the arm next to the crooked side. Squinting, by spectacles properly contrived, and by shooting with the bow. A paralytic motion in the eyes, by the cold bath and nervous remedies. Weakness in the eyes, by washing them in cold water, and not sparing them too much. Bashfulness and blushing, by company and encouragement. Crookedness in the legs, by being swung with moderate weights fastened to the feet, and using riding, as an exercise, more frequently than walking; never standing for any time together; and by iron strengtheners properly applied. Shooting with the long-bow is good for strengthening the chest and arms. Exercise, and regular hours of diet and rest, and simple food, for the appetite. Riding, especially on a hard-trotting horse, is the first of exercises, and a cure for complaints, which no medicine in the dispensatory will reach. Stammering is cured by people who profess that art. And even dumbness so far got the better of, that persons born so are brought to be capable of holding a sort of conversation with those who are used to them. Shortness of the neck, and stuntedness, are helped by being swung in a neck-swing. Almost any bad habit, as shrugging the  
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shoulders,

shoulders, nodding, making faces, and the like, may be helped by continual attention, and making the child do somewhat laborious, or disagreeable to him, every time you catch him at his trick.

Of those parts of education, which take in science, I shall have occasion to treat in the following book.

### S E C T. VIII.

#### *Of the peculiar Management of Daughters.*

**F**EMALE children being as much by nature rational creatures, as males, it seems pretty obvious, that, in bringing them up to maturity, there is some regard to be had to the cultivation of their reason, as well as the adorning of their persons. As to the forming of their tempers, the directions above given will, with some small variation, suit them. As girls are more apt to run into vanity, on account of their beauty or dress, than the other sex; it will be necessary to guard against this folly, which, else, will grow with years, till it becomes unsufferable. And after all, there is no doubt, but a foolish head is always contemptible, whether it be covered with a cap or a wig. And a creature, that values itself only upon its form, and has no other ambition but to make that agreeable, must be sunk to a very low pitch of understanding,  
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and has little pretence to rank itself with rational beings.

The proper education of a daughter, if a parent has a mind she should ever be fit for filling a place in society, and being a suitable companion and help meet for a man of sense, is, first, Reading with propriety and life; readiness at her needle, especially for people in middling stations; a free command of her pen, and complete knowledge of numbers, as far as the rule called *Practice*. A woman cannot with ease and certainty keep, or examine, the accounts of her own family, without these accomplishments. The knowledge of *English* grammar or orthography is absolutely necessary to any person, who would write to be read. Without some acquaintance with geography and history, a woman's conversation must be confined within a very narrow compass, and she will enjoy much less pleasure in that of her husband and his friends; and his entertainment from her conversation must likewise be very much abridged, if she can bear no part on any but the subjects of fashions or scandal.

Plays, romances, love-verses, and cards, are utter ruin to young women. For, if they find any entertainment in them, they must unavoidably give their minds a cast, which can never be suitable to the useful part of a female character, which is wholly domestic. For, whatever the fine ladies of our age may think of the matter,

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it is certain, that the only rational ambition they can have, must be to make obedient daughters, loving wives, prudent mothers and mistresses of families, faithful friends, and good christians; characters much more valuable than those of skilful gamesters, fine dancers, singers, or dressers, or than even of wits and critics.

## S E C T. IX.

*Of placing Youth out Apprentices.*

**T**HERE are some grievances with respect to the 'prenticing out of youth intended for business, which I have long wished to see redressed. As, in the first place, it does not appear to me necessary, that parents should hurry their sons away from places of education, before they can, by their age, be supposed to be sufficiently grounded in the various parts of useful and ornamental knowledge, or (which is of infinitely more consequence) principled in virtue and religion, to place them out apprentices seven years, to learn to sell a piece of linen, or a loaf of sugar, where there is an end of all opportunity of improvement, except in business. While a youth is at boarding-school, he lives with one, who is to be supposed qualified to instruct him, and conduct his morals, and who is evidently interested to bestow his best diligence for those purposes. Whereas a merchant, or tradesman, who does not depend upon apprentices, as a master of a place  
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of education does upon pupils, and is besides immersed in a variety of business, cannot be supposed to have it in his power or inclination to give much attention to the conduct of his apprentices. On these considerations, I say, it seems unreasonable, and prejudicial to youth, to be removed, as they often are, from boarding-school at fourteen or fifteen years, when they are just come to be capable of the more manly and useful parts of knowledge, as geography, mathematics, philosophy, moral and natural, and the like; and to be thrust down into a merchant's or tradesman's kitchen among menial servants, or let loose among a set of thoughtless young fellows like themselves, but half-principled, and therefore too liable to be led astray by every seducer. I cannot see the necessity of a youth's being placed out for seven years to learn the mystery of buying in and selling out half a dozen different kinds of goods, at the same time, that to learn all the intricacies of the business of an attorney, five years clerkship is reckoned sufficient.

Having mentioned the common manner of entertaining apprentices, I beg leave to add, that, though I see no advantage in treating young people with too much delicacy, yet it seems absurd to place the sons of merchants and substantial tradesmen with chamber-maids and footmen. This I know is done, where three or four hundred pounds apprenticeship is given. If a gen-



tleman thinks it a restraint upon his conversation, to have his apprentices at his own table, it would be no great matter, methinks, for the fathers of the youth to allow somewhat extraordinary for a separate room and proper accommodations, to prevent their keeping company with people beneath them, from whom they are likely to learn nothing but what is mean and sordid.

The modern way of life of our citizens, is indeed such, as, generally speaking, to expose the youth placed with them almost to the certainty of being debauched, if not utterly ruined. The master and mistress of the house engaged in the evenings in visiting, receiving visits, attending clubs, or public diversions, or in short, any way but minding their own families. And in the summer-season out of town on Saturdays and Sundays; some half the week; while their apprentices are left to themselves, exposed to the solicitations of the lewd women, who are allowed, to the shame of law and magistracy, to infest every street in *London*, and to turn the city into a great brothel. The sense of the fatal hazards the youth run during their apprenticeships in *London*, has determined many judicious parents of late years, to send their sons to pass them in foreign parts, where the way of life of the trading people is different from what prevails here.

## S E C T. X.

*Of choosing Employments for Sons, and of providing Fortunes for them.*

**I**N order to a person's having a chance for success and happiness in life, it is necessary that his parents consult the natural bent of his genius, before they determine what employment to put him to. The neglect of this most important particular has been the cause of infinite distress and disappointment, and has obliged many, after a course of misfortunes and vexations, in a way of life for which they have not been fitted by nature, to lay aside their first scheme, and enter upon that for which nature has intended them. It is common for parents to resolve to give their children such employments as suit their own humour or convenience, rather than the capacity or natural bent of the young persons, who are the most concerned in the matter; to bring up a plain honest youth to law or physic, or thrust a heavy, plodding boy into a pulpit; to hamper a genius behind a counter, or bury him among bales of goods in a warehouse. But surely no parent of any consideration can hope to get the better of nature, to give his child qualifications which she has not given him, or to remove the insuperable difficulties she has laid in the way.

The tempers of youth, however, may in general be said to divide themselves into two species.

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One is the inquisitive, penetrating, and studious ; and the other, the slow and laborious ; both valuable in their respective ways. There are of these several subdivisions, I mean those who have a particular turn to some single art or science. All which ought to be studied with the utmost care by the parent, and humoured in the scheme of life intended for them. Had I a son, whose natural turn was to mechanics, I should certainly rather put him apprentice to a watchmaker, or a silversmith, in which I should think he could not fail to become eminent, and consequently to get a subsistence, if he applied diligently to his business, than bring him up to a learned profession, in which I could not expect him to make any figure. And so of other particular turns.

If the genius of a youth is bright, it will discover itself by its own native luitre ; so that a parent will be at no loss to determine his son's particular cast. If his capacity is slow, it will perhaps be necessary to try him with a variety of employments and exercises ; and as it is found that almost every rational creature has a turn for somewhat, and is by nature fitted for some place or other in society, a little time and attention will discover what a parent searches for.

Whatever the pride of parents may suggest, it is plain from observation, that great vivacity and brightness of parts in our sex, as well as extraordinary beauty or wit in the other, do in fact  
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often prove fatal to both; as they naturally tend to fill the heads of those, who are possessed of them, with vanity and ambition, and to put them upon romantic projects, which take off their attention from the serious business of life. Not but that men of the finest parts are sometimes found as steddly and prudent in the management of their affairs, as the dull and plodding; some of which likewise are found to grovel all their lives long in poverty and obscurity. But, generally speaking, it is otherwise. So that a parent, who has reason to look upon his son, as one who promises to make a figure by his parts, ought to be humble and cautious; for when such fly out, they go dreadful lengths in vice or folly; as, on the other hand, if a parent's prospects, with regard to his son's natural abilities, be less pleasing, he is not therefore to despair of making him fit for some useful and valuable station in life.

It is a very great mistake some parents run into, that the greatest kindness they can do their children is to give them, or leave them, a great fortune. With this view, some labour and toil all their lives, pinching themselves and their families, and grudging their children an education suitable to their fortunes, only to heap up an enormous capital, which is likely to be dissipated in much less time than it cost to amass it.

If a young gentleman is to inherit a large estate, without a suitable education, his great fortune will only make him the more extensively

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known and despised. And, if his prospects in life be meaner, he will have the more occasion for an universal education, to give him a chance for raising himself in the world. Experience shews, that it is not in fact those who have set out in life with large capitals, that live happiest, and hold out longest in credit. One half of such traders, on the strength of their large fortunes and extensive credit, run into the fatal error of over-trading, and the other into expensive living. Whereas a young man, who has been prudently educated, and provided by his parents with a fortune sufficient for setting him on foot in business, knowing that he has no superfluous wealth to trust to, and consequently, that it must be by frugality, industry, and prudence, that he must think to raise himself, will be likely to apply with steadiness and diligence to his business; of which he will in the end reap the fruits. And if it should happen, in spite of his utmost care and prudence, that he should come to misfortunes, which, I believe, no parent will pretend to insure his son against, a well-accomplished man is not likely ever to be long destitute of a subsistence. Upon the whole, it is the greatest weakness a man of substance can fall into, to cramp his son's education for the sake of adding a few hundred pounds to his fortune. For it is not a few hundred pounds that will support him, when the bulk of his fortune is gone: but a useful education will  
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enable him to get a subsistence, when the whole of his paternal fortune is gone.

## S E C T. XI.

*Of settling Children of both Sexes in Life.*

**W**HEN a parent has in this manner equipped out his son with a proper education, and settled him in a way of living, if he has a fair opportunity, it will be his wisdom to see him, in his own life-time, likewise settled in marriage. It is on all accounts the safest and best state. And a man is always less likely to break loose from virtue, after he has entered into a settled way of life, than before.

What I have said of a son may be urged with still more reason with respect to a daughter. It may often be much more prudent, to give away a daughter in marriage on an indifferent offer, I mean, as to circumstances of wealth, than to let slip an opportunity of seeing her placed out of harm's way. But no consideration will make up for the unhappiness she will be doomed to, if she falls into the hands of a morose, a furious, a drunken, a debauched, a spendthrift, or a jealous husband. If a man may be said to have shaken hands with happiness, who has thrown himself into the arms of a bad woman, much less reason has a weak helpless woman to expect ever to see a happy day, after she comes into the power of a man void of virtue or humanity.

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Let those parents, therefore, who constrain their children, for the sake of sordid views, to plunge themselves into irretrievable misery, consider what they have to answer for, in doing an injury, which they never can repair, to those whose real happiness they were, by all the ties of nature and reason, bound to promote.

It is to be hoped, what is here said of the danger of constraining the inclinations of children in marriage, will by no means be construed as if intended to encourage young people to obstinacy and contempt of the advice of parents in making a choice for life.

### S E C T. XII.

#### *Of Retiring from Business.*

**A**S, on the one hand, it is odious for a man of an overgrown fortune to go on in business to a great age, still striving to increase a heap already larger than is necessary, to the prejudice of younger people, who ought to have a clear stage and opportunity of making their way in life; so it is vain for a person, who has spent his days in an active sphere, to think of enjoying retirement, before the time of retirement be come. He who resolves at once to change his way of life from action to retirement, or from one state to another directly contrary, without being prepared for it by proper age and habit, for some continuance of time, will find, that he  
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will no sooner have quitted his former way of life, than he will desire to be in it again.

It is, on this, as well as other accounts, of great advantage, that a man have acquired some turn to reading, and the more sober entertainments of life, in his earlier days. There is not a much more deplorable sort of existence, than that which is dragged on by an old man, whose mind is unfurnished with the materials proper for yielding him some entertainment suitable to the more sedate time of life; I mean, useful knowledge. For the remembrance of fifty years spent in scraping of money, or in pursuing pleasure, or in indulging vicious inclinations, must yield but poor entertainment at a time of life, when a man can at best say, he has been.

## S E C T. XIII.

### *Of disposing of Effects by Will.*

**I**T is a strange weakness in some people, to be averse to making their wills, and disposing of their effects, while they are in good health, and have ease of mind, and a sound judgment, to do it in a proper manner; as if a man must certainly die soon after he has made his will. It is highly proper, that people, who have any thing considerable to leave, should settle their affairs in such a distinct manner, that their intentions may appear plain and indisputable, and their heirs may not have  
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an endless and vexatious law-suit, instead of a fortune.

For this purpose I would advise, that a gentleman, at his leisure, draw up a sketch of his will, leaving the names of the legatees, and the sums blank, if he chooses to conceal either the state of his affairs, or the persons he intends to benefit at his death. This draught he may have examined by those who are judges of such matters; so that he may be quite easy as to the condition he leaves his wife and children, or other relations in.

The calamity, in which a widow and orphans are involved, who, through some quirk of law, or the omission of some necessary formality, find themselves disappointed of their whole dependance, and have the mortification to see an heir at law (to the shame of law) seize on what the deceased intended for their support; the circumstances, I say, of a family thus plunged into want and misery, from the fairest expectations, are to the last degree deplorable.

A man ought to consider, that it is a tender point for an affectionate wife to touch upon, and ought to spare her the trouble of solliciting him upon this head. For it must be no easy state of mind a woman must be in, who considers, that she and her children depend, for their daily bread, upon the slender thread of the life of an husband; who at the same time has it in his

power to secure her effectually by taking only a very little trouble.

It is an unjust and absurd practice of many, in disposing of their effects by will, to shew such excessive partiality to some of their children beyond others. To leave to an eldest son the whole estate, and to each of the other children perhaps one year's rent. The consequence, indeed, of this is often, that the heir, finding himself in possession of an estate, concludes he shall never be able to run it out; and may be got, through extravagance, just within sight of want, by the time his industrious brothers, who, having no such funds to trust to, were obliged to exert themselves, have got estates, or are in a fair way toward them. This, I say, is a common consequence of the unequal distribution of estates. But, whatever the consequence be, it seems pretty evident, that to treat so very differently those who are alike one's offspring, cannot be strictly just.

It proves often a fatal error in the disposal of effects for the benefit of one's family, to leave them in the hands of any private person whatever, especially of one who has concerns in trade. The state of such a one's affairs must, by the very course of trade, be so liable to change, that no money can be absolutely safe, which he can lay his hands upon. We see every day instances of the failure of traders, who have generally passed for men of first-rate fortunes, and often see  
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young families ruined by their ruin. If it be plain that the public funds are at least a more probable security than any private, one would think it natural to fix upon the best, since even the best is not too secure.

## S E C T. XIV.

*Of old Age.*

**W**HEN people draw toward old age, the infirmities of nature, joined with the various ills of life, become more and more grievous; and strength of mind continually decaying, the burden becomes at last hardly supportable. To wave, for the present, all moral or religious considerations, I will only observe, that, if one would, in any period of life, or under any distress whatever, desire to have his grievances as tolerable as possible, there is no surer means for that end, than to endeavour to preserve an equal, composed, and resigned temper of mind. To struggle, and fret, and rage, at every misfortune, or hardship, is tearing open the wound, and making it fester. Composing the mind to contentment and patience is the most likely means to heal it up. It is therefore obvious what conduct prudence directs to in the case of distress or hardship.

But in what light does this shew the prudence of many people? Do we not see, that they, who have no considerable real distresses in life to  
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struggle with, take care to make themselves miserable, by mustering up imaginary, or heightening inconsiderable misfortunes? Does not a courtier, in the midst of affluence, and with independence in his power, make himself as unhappy about a cold look from the minister, as a poor tradesman is at the loss of his principal customer? Is not a fine lady as much distressed, if her lap-dog has a fit of the colic, as a poor woman about the sickness of a child? Such imaginary unfortunates complain heavily of the afflictions of life, while neither labours under any worth mentioning, but what are of their own making.

When people have all their lives allowed themselves to give way to foolish discontent and uneasiness, it is no wonder if, when they come to old age, they find themselves unhappy, and by their peevishness make all about them unhappy, and put it in their hearts to wish them well out of the world.

The art of growing old with a good grace, is none of the least considerable in life. In order to this, it is absolutely necessary, that a man have spent the former part of his days in a manner consistent with reason and religion. He who has passed his life wholly in secular pursuits, in grasping at riches, in aspiring after preferments, in amusing himself with shew and ostentation, in wallowing in sensuality and voluptuousness; what foundation has he laid for passing old age, with dignity?

dignity? What is more universally despised than an old man, whose mind, unfixed with knowledge, and unaffected with a sense of goodness, still grovels after the objects of sense, still hankers after the scenes which formerly engaged him; scenes of vanity and folly in any age; but in the graver part of life unnatural and monstrous? Yet there is nothing more certain (for universal experience confirms it) than that according as a person has formed his mind in the younger part of life, such it will be to the last. The ruling passion seldom fails, till all fails. He who has made the bottle his chief delight, will drink on even when he has hardly breath to swallow a glass of wine. The impure lecher will creep after his mistress, when his knees knock together. The miser, who has all his life made riches his god, will be scrambling after the wealth of this world, with one foot in the other. The vain coquet will shew affectation, when she can no longer move any passion but pity. The brainless card-player will waste the last awful remains of life in an amusement unworthy of the most inconsiderate age. Even when all is over, how do we see many old people in their conversation dwell with pleasure on the vanities, and even the vices, of their younger days?

How should it be otherwise, than that the mind, which has been for fifty years together constantly bent one way, should preserve to the end the cast it has received, and kept so long?

In

In the same manner, those who have been so wise, as to view life in its proper light, as a transient state, to be temperately enjoyed while it lasts; who have improved their minds with knowledge and enriched them with virtue and piety; have qualified themselves for acting the last concluded scene with the same propriety as the rest. To such, their finding themselves unequal to the active or the gayer scenes of life, is no manner of mortification. Indifferent to them, while engaged in them, they quit them with indifference; sure to find in retirement a fund of the noblest entertainment from sober and wise conversation, from reading, and from views of that future world, for which the conscience of a well-spent life assures them of their being in a state of preparation. Useful by their wise and pious conversation while they live, they go off the stage lamented, leaving behind them the sweet favour of a good name, and the universal approbation of the wise and good.

## S E C T. XV.

*Of the Dignity of female Life, prudentially considered.*

**W**ITHOUT the general concurrence of both sexes, in a prudent and virtuous conduct, the perfection of human nature is not to be attained. The influence which the fair sex have, and ought to have, in life, is so great,  
that

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that their good behaviour can give a general turn to the face of human affairs; and a great deal more than is commonly imagined, depends upon their discretion; since (to say nothing of their influence over our sex, in the characters of mistresses and wives) the minds of the whole species receive their first cast from womankind.

The dignity of female life, exclusive of what is common to both sexes, consists in an equal mixture of the reserve with benevolence in the virgin-state; and affection and submission in that of marriage; a diligent attention to the forming of the tempers of children of both sexes in their earliest years (for that lies wholly upon the mother), and the whole education of the daughters; for I know of none so proper for young ladies as a home-education.

The greatest errors and dangers to be avoided by ladies are comprehended in the following paragraphs.

Vanity in womankind is, if possible, more absurd than in the other sex. Men have bodily strength, authority, learning, and such like pretences, for puffing themselves up with pride. But woman's only peculiar boast is beauty. For virtue and good sense are never the subjects of vanity.

There is no endowment of less consequence than elegance of form and outside. A mass of flesh, blood, humours, and impurities, covered over with a well-coloured skin, is the definition

definition of beauty. Whether is this more properly a matter of vanity, or of mortification? Were it incomparably more excellent than it is, nothing can be more absurd than to be proud of what one has had no manner of hand in procuring; but is wholly the gift of heaven. A woman may as reasonably be proud of the lilies of the field, or the tulips of the garden, as of the beauty of her own face. They are both the works of the same hand; equally out of human power to give, or to preserve; equally trifling and despicable, when compared with what is substantially excellent; equally frail and perishing.

Affectation is a vice capable of disgracing beauty worse than pimples or the small-pox. I have often seen ladies, in public places, of the most exquisite forms, render themselves, by affectation and visible conceit, too odious to be looked at without disgust; who, by a modest, and truly female behaviour, might have commanded the admiration of every eye. But I shall say the less upon this head, in consideration, that it is, generally speaking, to our sex that female affectation is to be charged. A woman cannot indeed become compleatly foolish, or vicious, without our assistance.

Talkativeness in either sex is generally a proof of vanity and folly; but is in womankind, especially in company with men, and above all with men of understanding and learning, wholly



out of character, and peculiarly disagreeable to people of sense.

If we appeal either to reason, scripture, or universal consent, we shall find a degree of submission to the male sex to be an indispensable part of the female character. And to set up for an equality with the sex to which nature has given the advantage, and formed for authority and action, is opposing nature, which is never done innocently.

The great hazard run by the female sex, and the point in which their prudence, or weakness, appears most conspicuous, is in love matters. To a woman's conduct with regard to the other sex, is owing, more than to all other things, the happiness or misery of her existence in this world; for I am at present only considering things in a prudential light.

A woman cannot act an imprudent part in listening to the proposal of a lover, whether of the honourable or dishonourable kind, without bringing herself to ruin irretrievable. If she does but seem to hear with patience the wanton seducer, her fame is irrecoverably blasted, and her value for ever sunk. The mere suspicion of guilt, or even of inclination, soils her reputation; and such is the delicacy of virgin-purity, that a puff of foul breath stains it; and all the streams that flow, will not restore its former lustre. Nothing therefore can exceed the folly of so much as hearing one sigh of the dishonourable lover.

His

His raptures are only the expressions of his impure desire. His admiration of the beautiful and innocent is only the effect of eagerness to gratify his filthy passion, by the ruin of beauty and innocence. He pretends to love: but so may the wolf declare his desire to devour the lamb. Both love their prey: but it is only to destroy.

Again, with respect to honourable proposals, prudence will suggest to a woman, that the hazard she runs in throwing herself away, is incomparably more desperate than that of the other sex, who have every advantage for bettering, or bearing, their afflictions of every kind. The case of the man, who is unhappily married, is calamitous; but that of the woman, who has a bad husband, is desperate, and incurable but by death.

If there be any general rule for ladies to judge of the characters of men, who offer them proposals of marriage, it may be, To find out what figure they make among their sex. It is to be supposed, that men are generally qualified to judge of one another's merits; and as our sex are accustomed to less delicacy and reserve than the other, it is not impossible to come at mens real characters, especially with regard to their tempers, and dispositions, upon which the happiness of the married life depends, more than upon capacity, learning, or wealth.

Too great a delight in dress and finery, besides the expence of time and money, which they

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occasion in some instances, to a degree beyond all bounds of decency and common sense; tend naturally to sink a woman to the lowest pitch of contempt among all those of either sex, who have capacity enough to put two thoughts together. A creature who spends its whole time in dressing, gaming, prating, and gadding, is a being originally indeed of the rational make; but who has sunk itself beneath its rank, and is to be considered at present as nearly on a level with the monkey-species.

### S E C T. XVI.

#### *Miscellaneous Thoughts on Prudence in Action.*

**T**O pursue worthy ends by wise means is the whole of active prudence. And this must be done with resolution, diligence, and perseverance, till the point is gained, or appears impracticable.

To retort an injury, is to be almost as bad as the aggressor. When two throw dirt against one another, can either keep himself clean?

Action and contemplation are no way inconsistent; but rather reliefs to one another. When you are engaged in study, throw business out of your thoughts. When in business, think of your business only.

To a man of business, knowledge is an ornament. To a studious man, action is a relief.

If

If you ever promise at all, take care, at least, that it be so as nobody may suffer by trusting to you.

If you have debtors, let not your lenity get the better of your prudence; nor your care of your own interest make you forget humanity. A prison is not for the unfortunate; but the knavish.

Tractableness to advice, and firmness against temptation, are no way inconsistent.

There is more true greatness in generously owning a fault, and making proper reparation for it, than in obstinately defending a wrong conduct. But, quitting your purpose, retreat rather like a lion than a cur.

A mind hardened against affliction, and a body against pain and sickness, are the two securities of earthly happiness.

Let a person find out his own peculiar weakness, and be ever suspicious of himself on that side. Let a passionate man, for example, resolve always to shew less resentment than reason might justify; there is no danger of his erring on that side. Let a talkative man resolve always to say less than the most talkative person in the company he is in. If one has reason to suspect himself of loving money too much, let him give always at least somewhat more than has been given by a noted miser.

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A man, who does not know in general his own weakness, must either be a person of high rank, or a fool.

How comes it, that we judge so severely the actions we did a great while ago? It is because we are now at a proper distance, and look upon them with an indifferent eye, as on those of another person. The very objects which now employ us so much, and the conduct we now justify so strenuously, can we say that the time will not come, when we shall look upon them as we now do upon our follies of ten or twenty years backwards? Why can we not view ourselves, and our own behaviour, at all times in the same manner? This shews our partiality for ourselves in a most absurd light.

When you are dead, the letters which compose your name will be no more to you, than the rest of the alphabet. Leave the rage of fame to wits and heroes. Do you strive to live usefully in this world, and you will be happy in the next.

It is best, if you can keep quite clear of the great. But if you happen at any time to be thrust into their company, keep up in your behaviour to them the dignity of a man of spirit and worth, which is the only true greatness. If you sneak and cringe, they will trample upon you.

Beware of mean-spirited people. They are commonly revengeful and malicious.

The

The following advantages are likely to make a compleatly accomplished man. 1. Good natural parts. 2. A good temper. 3. Good, and general, education, begun early. 4. Choice, not immense, reading, and careful digesting. 5. Experience of various fortune. 6. Conversation with men of letters and of business. 7. Knowledge of the world, gained by conversation, business, and travel.

If the world suspect your well-intended designs, be not uneasy. It only shews that mankind are themselves false and artful, which is the cause of their being suspicious.

Never set up for a jack-in-an-office. Men of real worth are modest, and decline employment, though much fitter for it than those who thrust themselves forward. But if good can be done, do it, if no one else will.

How much less trouble it costs a well-disposed mind to pardon, than to revenge!

If your enemy is forced to have recourse to a lye to blacken you, consider what a comfort it is, to think of your having supported such a character, as to render it impossible for malice to hurt you without the aid of falsehood. And trust to the genuine fairness of your character to clear itself in the end.

Whoever has gone through much of life, must remember, that he has thrown away a great deal of useless uneasiness upon what was much worse in his apprehension, than in reality.

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A miser will sometimes serve you any way you please to ask him, purely to save his money.

If you give away nothing till you die, even your own children will hardly thank you for what you leave them.

A great number of small favours will engage some people more to you, than one great one. And where they hope for more and more, they will be willing to go on to serve you.

An idle person is dead before his time.

The great difficulty of behaviour is in case of surprise.

The truest objects of charity, are those whom modesty conceals.

A generous man does not lose by a generous man.

It will be a great misfortune to you, if an intimate friend, or near relation, falls into poverty. You must either lend your assistance, or be ill-looked upon. And people are often blamed for niggardliness, when, if all the truth were known (which might be very improper), they would be justified in having given to the full extent of their abilities.

A man's character and behaviour in public, and at home, are often as different as a lady's looks at a ball, and in a morning before she has gone through the ceremony of the toilet. But real merit, like artless beauty, shines forth at all times distinguishingly illustrious.

There

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There is nothing more agreeable to human nature, than to have somewhat moderately to employ both mind and body. There is nothing more unnatural than for a creature endowed with various active powers to be wholly inactive. Hence the silly and mischievous inventions of cards, dice, and other amusements, which empty people have been obliged to have recourse to, as a kind of artificial employments, to prevent human nature from sinking into an absolute lethargy. Why might not our luxurious wasters of heaven's most inestimable gift, as well employ the same eagerness of activity in somewhat that might turn to account to themselves and others, as in the insipid and unprofitable drudgery of the card-table?

To serve your friends, to your own ruin, is romantic. To think of none but yourself, is sordid.

Riches, and happiness, have nothing to do with one another, though extreme poverty and misery be nearly related.

Judge of yourself by that respect you have voluntarily paid you by men of undoubted integrity and discernment, and who have no interest to flatter you. Act up to your character. Support your dignity. But do not make yourself unhappy, if you meet not with the honour you deserve from those whose esteem no one values.

Despise



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Despise trifling affronts, and they will vanish,  
A little water will put out a fire, which, blown  
up, would burn a city.

Give away what you can part with. Throw  
away nothing: you know not how much you  
may miss it.

Provide for after-life, so as to enjoy the pre-  
sent. Enjoy the present, so as to leave a provision  
for the time to come.

Avoid too many, and great, obligations. It is  
running into debt beyond what you may be able  
to pay.

Conclude at least nine parts in ten of what is  
handed about by common fame to be false.

Wealth is a good servant, but a bad master.

Do not offend a bad man; because he will stick  
at nothing to be revenged. It is cruel to insult  
a good man, who deserves nothing but good. A  
great man may easily crush you. And there is  
none so mean, who cannot do mischief. There-  
fore follow peace with all men.

To carry the triumph over a person you have  
got the better of, too far, is mean, and impru-  
dent: it is mean, because you have got the bet-  
ter; it is imprudent, because it may provoke  
him to revenge your insolence in some desperate  
way.

Presents ought to be genteel; not expensive:  
they are not valued by generous minds for their  
own sake; but as marks of love or esteem.

Provide for the worst: but hope the best.

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Set about nothing, without first thinking it over carefully. To say, "I did not think of that," is much the same as saying, "You must know, I am a simpleton."

Whoever anticipates troubles, will find he has thrown away a great deal of terror and anguish to no purpose.

Accustom yourself to have some employment for every hour you can prudently snatch from business. This book was put together in that manner, else it could never have been writ by its author.

Live so, as no body may believe bad reports against you.

Whenever you find, you don't care to look into your affairs, you may assure yourself that they will soon not be fit to look into.

Reform yourself first, and then others.

Don't place your happiness in ease from pain : there is no such thing in this world ; but in patience under affliction, which is within your reach.

If you are a master, don't deprive yourself of so great a rarity as a good servant for a slight offence. If you are a dependent, don't throw yourself out of a good place for a slight affront.

Do what good offices you can : but leave yourself at liberty from promises and engagements.

Let no one overload you with favours : you will find it an unsufferable burden.

There

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There are many doublings in the human heart : do not think you can find out the whole of a man's real character at once, unless he is a fool.

If you would embroil yourself with all mankind at once, you have only to oppose every man's prevailing passion. Endeavour to mortify the proud man ; irritate the passionate ; put the miser to expence ; and you will have them all against you. On the other hand, if you had rather live peaceably, give way a little to the particular weakness of those you converse with.

It will take some time to raise your fortune in a fair way, and to fit you for a better world : it will therefore be proper to begin a course of industry and piety as early as possible.

Aim at desert rather than reward.

Let no pretence of friendship mislead you : he is not your friend, who attempts it.

Never keep a bad servant, in hope of his reformation.

It is seldom that either borrower or lender gets by the bargain.

Think yourself cheap off with a little scandal for extraordinary goodness : how many have paid their lives for their integrity ?

The friendship of an artful man is mere self-interest : you will get nothing by it.

If you trust a known knave, people will not so much as pity you, when you suffer by him.

In

In dealing with a person you suspect, it may be useful in conversation to draw him into difficulties, if possible, as they cross-examine witnesses at the bar, in order to find out the truth. It may even be of use to set him a talking; in the inadvertency and hurry of conversation, he may discover himself.

Consider how difficult a thing it must be to deceive the general eye of mankind, who are as much interested to detect you, as you are to deceive them.

He is surely a man of a greater reach, who can conduct his affairs without being obliged to have recourse to tricks and temporary expedients, than with them; he who knows how to secure the interest both of this world and the next, than he who cannot contrive to get a comfortable subsistence in this world without damning his soul.

It is foolish to shew your teeth when you cannot bite.

Whoever loves injuries, let him provoke injuries.

In prosperity, prepare for a change: in adversity, hope for one.

If you are ill-used by a man, especially a great one, put up the injury quietly, and be thankful it was not worse. When they do but a little mischief, the world has a good penny-worth of them.

If you let alone making your will till you come to a death-bed, you will not do it properly.

If you give at all, do it cheerfully.

If

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If you want to shew a person, that you see through his crafty designs, a hint between jest and earnest may do better than telling him bluntly and fully how he stands in your mind: from a little, he will guess the rest.

With the multiplicity of business every person has to do, how can people complain of being distressed for somewhat to pass the time? Besides private affairs to conduct, or oversee; children to form to wisdom and virtue; the distressed to relieve; the unthinking to advise; friends and country to serve; their own passions to conquer; their minds to furnish with knowledge, virtue, and religion; a whole eternity's happiness to provide for.

Try a friend before you trust him. Trust him no more than is necessary. Bear with any weakness that does not strike at the root of friendship. If a difference arise, bring the matter to a calm hearing. Make up the breach, if possible. But if friendship languishes for any time, let it expire peaceably.

There is as much meanness in taking every trifle for an affront, as in putting up the grossest indignity. The first is the character of a bully; the latter of a coward: which of the two had you rather be?

In all schemes, leave room for the possibility of a miscarriage.

Those are the best diversions, which most relieve the mind, and exercise the body; and which bring

bring the least expence of time and money. Mirth is one thing, and mischief another.

It is strange to reflect a little upon some of the irreconcilable contrarieties in human nature. Nothing seems more strongly worked into the constitution of the mind, than the love of liberty. Yet how very ready are we in some cases to give up our liberty? What more tyrannical than fashion? Yet how do all ranks, sexes, and ages enslave themselves in obedience to it? There is great reason to believe that it is wholly in compliance with custom, that many judicious, thinking people, waste so many valuable hours as we see they do, at an amusement, which must be a slavery to persons capable of thought, I mean the card-table. But such people ought to consider, how they can justify to themselves the throwing away so great a part of precious life, besides giving their countenance to a bad practice; merely because it is the fashion.

Bestir yourself while young: you will want rest when old.

Don't wish; but do.

Trust not relations, unless they be such as you would think worthy of trust, if they were strangers.

If you are not worth a shilling after all your debts are paid, don't spend a shilling that you can save. Don't squander away your hopes.

If you can live independent, never give up your liberty, and your leisure, much less your conscience,

conscience, to a great man. He has nothing to give in return for them. If you can but be contented in moderate circumstances, you may be happy, and keep your inestimable liberty, leisure, and integrity into the bargain.

People are better found out in their unguarded hours, than by the principal actions of their lives: the first is nature, the second art.

If you chance to have a quarrel with any one, by no means write letters, or send messages; bring the matter to a hearing, as quickly as possible, before your spirits have time to rankle. Endeavour rather to reconcile than conquer your enemy. By so doing, you take from him the inclination to hurt you, which is the best security. When you have reconciled him, take care, if you find he has acted a traiterous part, never to trust, or be intimately concerned with him, any more. You may love him as a fellow-creature; but not confide in him as a good man.

To gain applause, you must do as the archer, who obtains the prize by hitting the mark.

Asking a favour by letter, or giving a person time to think of it, is only giving him an opportunity of getting off handsomely.

It is not hard to find out a man's true merit, as to abilities. He who behaves well, is certainly no weak man. But nothing is more difficult, than to find out a man's character as to integrity.

He, who never misbehaved either in joy, in grief, or surprise, must have his wisdom at command,

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mand, in a manner almost superior to humanity; and may be pronounced a true hero.

Haste is but a poor apology: take time, and do your business well.

If you would not be forestalled by another, or laughed at in case of a disappointment, don't tell your designs.

If you are to be called a scrub, let it be for sparing; where frugality is proper. Who would spare in the education of a son; in carrying on a considerable law-suit; or in defraying the expence of a solemnity?

I would not answer for the conduct of the ablest man in the world, if I knew that he was so conceited of his own abilities, as to be above advice.

There is more good to be done in life by obstinate diligence, and perseverance, than most people seem aware of. The ant and bee are but little and weak animals; and yet, by constant application, they do wonders.

Do not scold or swear at your servants: they will despise you for a passionate, clamorous fool. Do not make them too familiar with you: they will make a wrong use of it, and grow saucy. Do not let them know all the value you have for them: they will presume upon your goodness, and conclude that you cannot do without them. Don't give them too great wages: it will put them above their business. Do not allow them too much liberty: they will want still more and



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more. Do not intreat them to live with you : if you do, they will conclude, they may live as they please.

Irresolution is as foolish as rashness. If the husbandman should never sow, or the ship-master never put to sea, where would be the harvest, or the gains ?

Don't think to prevail with a man in a fury, to calm his passion in a moment ; if you can persuade him to put off his revenge for some time, it will be the most you can hope. Advice may sometimes do good, when you do not expect it. People do not care to seem persuaded to alter any part of their conduct : for that is an acknowledgment, that they were in the wrong. But they may, perhaps, reflect afterwards upon what you said ; and, if they do not wholly reform the fault you reprov'd, they may rectify it in some measure.

To be regular, is prudence ; to go like a clock, is mere formality.

Don't wish for an increase of wealth ; it does but enlarge the desires : whereas happiness consists in the gratification of the wants of nature.

Where lies the wisdom of that revenge, which recoils upon one's self ? Instead of getting the better of your enemy, by offending your Maker in revenging an injury, you give your enemy the advantage of seeing you punished. If you would have the whole advantage, forgive ; and then,

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then, if he does not repent, the whole punishment will fall upon him.

Profuse giving or treating is laughed at by the wise, according to the old saying, Fools make feasts, &c.

He has a good income, who has but few occasions of spending: not he who has great rents, and great vents.

Providence can raise the meanest, or humble the mightiest: it is therefore absurd for the one to despair, or the other to presume.

In difficult businesses, it may answer good purposes, to let the proposal be made by a person of inferior consequence; and let another, whose word will have more weight, come, as if by chance, and second the motion.

Would you punish the spiteful? Shew him, that you are above his malice. The dart, he threw at you, will then rebound, and pierce him to the heart.

To get an estate fairly, requires good abilities. To keep and improve one, is not to be done without diligence and frugality. But to lose one with a grace, when it so pleases the Divine Providence, is a still nobler art.

He who promises rashly, will break his promise with the same ease as he made it.

Keep a watch over yourself, when you are in extreme good humour: artful people will take that opportunity to draw you into promises,

which may embarrass you either to break, or keep.

Your actions must not only be right, but expedient : they must not only be agreeable to virtue, but to prudence.

You may safely be umpire among strangers, but not among friends : in deciding between the former, you may gain ; among the latter, you must lose.

Great fame is like a great estate, hard to get, hard to keep.

Party is the madness of many, for the gain of a few ; says *Swift*.

If it gives you pain, or shame, to think of changing your scheme at the remonstrance of your faithful friend (which shews extreme weakness in you), you may get over that difficulty, by seeming to have thought of some additional consideration, which has moved you to follow his advice.

In a free country, there is little to be done by force : gentle means may gain you those ends, which violence would for ever put out of your power.

He who is unhappy, and can find no comfort at home, is unhappy indeed.

Never trust a man for the vehemence of his asseverations, whose bare word you would not trust : a knave will make no more of swearing to a falsehood, than of affirming it.

Theory

Theory will signify little, without address to put your knowledge in practice.

In affliction, constrain yourself to bear patiently for a day, or so, only for the sake of trying, whether patience does not lighten the burden: if the experiment answers, as you will undoubtedly find, you have only to continue it.

If you borrow, be sure of making punctual payment; else you will have no more trust.

Is it not better that your friend tell you your faults privately, than that your enemy talk of them publicly?

A princely mind will ruin a private fortune. Keep the rank in which Providence hath placed you: and do not make yourself unhappy, because you cannot afford whatever a wild fancy might suggest. The revenues of all the kingdoms of the world would not be equal to the expence of one extravagant person.

Where there is a prospect of doing good, neither be so forward in thrusting yourself into the direction of the business, as to keep out others, who might manage it better; nor so backward, through false modesty, as to let the thing go undone, for want of somebody to do it. If no one else, who could execute a good work better, will engage in it, do you undertake, and execute it as well as you can.

The man of books is generally awkward in business: the man of business is often superficial in knowledge.

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In engaging yourself for any person or thing, you will be sure to entangle yourself, if things should not turn out to your expectation. And if you get off for a little ridicule, think it a good bargain.

You may perhaps come to be great, or rich ; but remember the taxes and deductions you will be liable to, of hurry, noise, impertinence, flattery, envy, anxiety, disappointment ; not to mention remorse. All these, and a hundred other articles set on one side of the account, and your wealth and grandeur on the other, are you likely to be greatly a gainer in happiness, by quitting a private station for pomp and shew ? Ask those who have experience.

Necessity and ability live next door to one another.

If you never ask advice, you will hardly go always right. If you ask of too many, you will not know which way to go. If you obstinately oppose advice, you will certainly go wrong. A wicked counsellor will mislead you wilfully : a foolish one thoughtlessly.

Never take credit, where you can pay ready money ; especially of low dealers : they will make you pay interest with a vengeance.

Never refuse a good offer, for the sake of a better market : the first is certainty ; the latter only hope.

To

To make a thing come of another, which you must at last have done yourself, is an innocent, and often useful art in life.

Take care of irrevocable deeds.

He who has done all he could, has discharged his conscience.

Debt is one of the most substantial and real evils of life : especially when a man comes to be so plunged, as to have no prospect of ever getting clear. An honest mind in such circumstances, must be in a state of despair, because there is no hope of ever being in a condition to do justice to mankind.

Never let yourself be meanly betrayed into an admiration of a person of high rank, or fortune, whom you would despise, if he were your equal in station : none but fools and children are struck with tinsel.

It is an employment more useful in society, to be a maker-up of differences, than a professor of astronomy. But it requires prudence to know how to come between two people who are bickering at one another ; and not have a blow from one or other.

If you must give a person, who comes to ask a favour, the mortification of a denial, do not add to it that of an affront ; unless he has affronted you by his petition.

If you make use of the faults of others, as warnings to avoid falling into the same errors, you may profit by folly, as well as by wisdom.

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If you think of nothing but laughing at them, I know no great advantage you can get by that.

If you can, by any sudden contrivance, (for framing of which you do not find yourself reduced to the necessity of a lye, or any other baser art,) draw off part of the attention of your enemy, or disconcert his measures, as it is common in war to attack at several places at once; I hold it an honest and laudable artifice.

Do you not remember, when you was about twenty or twenty-five years of age, that you was very full of your own talents and accomplishments? Do you not find, that you have been growing every year since, more and more ignorant and weak in your own opinion? Let this teach you to put a proper estimate upon your attainments, and to know that the time will come, when (if you be found worthy of true knowledge) you will reflect on all your acquisitions in this state, as comparatively mean and trivial.

Look back upon the difficulties and troubles you have been embarrassed with in life; and observe, whether most of them have not been occasioned by misconduct, pride, passion, folly, and vice: and if you find you cannot bring yourself to give up what has cost you infinite trouble and vexation, conclude yourself a confirmed incurable madman.

If ever you engage in any design for the public good, depend upon meeting with almost as many hindrances, as you have different persons

to be concerned with. You will have a difficulty started by almost every one, to whom you propose your scheme. One will tell you, it will do no good ; another, that it will do harm ; and almost all will be cold to what is not of their own proposing. Some will seem to come into your scheme at once, and will by degrees draw you out of the way you was in. By and by, some bugbear starts up before them ; and then they are as hasty to desert you, as they were sanguine to join you. Many love to make a shew of public spirit, while there is no trouble to be taken, or expence to be laid out ; but when you expect them to bestir themselves in earnest, you find yourself disappointed. Many, for the mere vanity of being in a scheme, will be very busy ; but if they find, they cannot be of the importance they desire, or that they cannot rule all, the public good may shift for itself, for what they care ; they will have no concern, where they must go along with others. The timorousness of some ; the difficulty of others, with respect to their characters, which they do not care to hazard for the public advantage ; and the rashness of others, who will be meddling ; the coldness, the forwardness, the pride, the diffidence, of those who should go along with you, will be so many obstacles in your way, which will heartily plague you, if not wholly disconcert your scheme. But we must not, on account of difficulties, resolve against attempting any thing for the general advantage.



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advantage. On the contrary, the more the difficulty, the greater the praise. The proper method of proceeding on such occasions, I take to be as follows.

Consider carefully your scheme, with its probable consequences, comparing it with whatever you have known done, that may coincide with, or resemble it, either at home or in foreign countries. Then talk it over with one or more friends, whom you know to be men of understanding and sincerity. Keep it as private as possible, till it be almost ripe for execution. Carry it as far as you can, before you desire the concurrence of any number of persons, especially of high rank. They are generally, and not altogether without reason, suspicious of whatever is proposed to them as a project. And one will not be first, and another will not be first, in a new scheme; though they will perhaps join with others, especially of their own rank. By this conduct, you may by degrees draw into a concurrence with you some persons, whose names may be of service, and may prevent the objections which may be made by others. For when people see a design going into immediate execution, they will consider it in a very different manner from what is only proposed as a possible scheme, but is yet wholly immature.

I cannot help wondering at the turn of many peoples minds, who are fond of what is far-fetched, merely for its being foreign. Whereas one would think self-love, which produces so many foolish

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foolish effects, might at least produce one reasonable one, I mean, to make people fond of home, and whatever is the product of their own country, and their own grounds. Why should we love our own children, our own works, and our own weaknesses, merely because they are our own, at the same time, that we love foreign fashions, wines, musicians, &c. merely because they are foreign? For my part, I think it is much more for an *English* gentleman to boast, that the provisions of his table are the product of his own estate, and the dress he wears, the manufacture of his own country, than that the four quarters of the globe have been ransacked to feed and cloath him.

If, while you are young, and bad habits are yet but weak in you, you have not strength of mind to conquer them, how will you be able to do it, when they have acquired strength by length of time and practice? If you don't find yourself now disposed to look into the state of your mind, and to repent and reform, while there is less to set right, how will you bring yourself hereafter to examine your own heart, when all is confusion within, and nothing fit to be looked into? Or how will you bring yourself to repent and reform, when there will be so much to set right, that you will not know where to begin?

It is easy to keep from gaming, drunkenness, or any other fashionable vice. You have only to lay

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lay down a firm resolution, and fix in your mind a steady aversion against them. When once your humour is known, nobody will trouble you. They will perhaps say of you, He is a queer fellow, and won't do as other people do. At last, those who cannot live without the card-table and the bottle, will drop you; and then you have only to seek out company where improvement is more pursued than amusement. I am mistaken if you will be a great loser by the exchange.

Make a sure bargain beforehand with workmen; and by no means be put off with their telling you, they will refer the price to your discretion.

A person, who fills a place of eminence, will do well to observe the following rules, 1. Above all things, to act a strictly just and upright part: for that will be sure to end well. 2. To make his advantage of the errors of his predecessors. 3. To avoid all extremes in general: violent measures are wholly inconsistent with prudence. 4. To suspect all; but take care not to seem suspicious of any. 5. To be content with a moderate income, and moderate ostentation: great riches and grandeur infallibly draw envy and hatred. 6. To be easy of access: stiffness is universally hated; and affability tends to reconcile people to the private character of a person whose public conduct may be obnoxious. 7. To hear all opinions, and follow the best. 8. To

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8. To listen attentively to the remarks made by enemies. 9. To shew to inferiors somewhat personally great in his conduct and character: it exposes a man of rank to extreme contempt, to observe that what makes the difference between him and his inferiors, is chiefly dress, riches, or station. 10. To retire in time, if possible, with a reputation unsullied.

Health; a good conscience; one hundred a year for a single person, or two for a family; the real necessities of life are soon reckoned up. If there happen to be in the neighbourhood a few conversible people, with whom you may walk, or ride out, hear a song, crack a harmless joke, or have a game at bowls, you are possessed of the whole luxury of life. Where is the man whose merit may challenge such happiness? Yet how many are there dissatisfied in affluence beyond this?

If you find yourself in a thriving way, keep in it.

Throw sordid self out of your mind, if you think of being truly great in spirit.

A readiness at throwing any sudden thought which may occur, either in reading, or conversation, into easy language, may be of great use toward improvement in prudence for action, and furniture for conversation. One who accustoms himself much to making remarks of all kinds in writing, must in time have by him a collection containing somewhat upon every thing.

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I do not know a much greater unhappiness in life, than that of being connected, by blood or friendship, with unfortunate necessitous people. A generous mind cannot bear to see them sink, without endeavouring to help them out of their difficulties. The consequence of which is, being drawn into difficulties by their means. If you lend, and ask for your own, a quarrel follows. And if you give freely, they will depend on your supporting them in idleness. And after all, what is most vexatious is, that you can seldom do any good to imprudent and unthriving people. Such connexions a prudent man will avoid, or give up as soon as possible.

Do not think of any great design after forty years of age.

The very deliberating upon a business is half the business.

Your neighbour has more income than enough; you have just enough. Is your neighbour the better for having what he has no use for? Are you the worse for being free from the trouble of what would be useless to you?

Better consider for an hour than repent for a year.

Let scandal alone, and it will die away of itself: oppose it, and it will spread the faster.

Let safety and innocence be two indispensable ingredients in all your amusements: is there any pleasure in what leads to loss of health, fortune, or soul?

Take

Take care of falling out of conceit with your wife, your station, habitation, business, or any thing else, which you cannot change. Let no comparisons once enter into your mind : the consequence will be restlessness, envy, and unhappiness.

Be not desirous of scenes of grandeur, of heightened pleasures and diversions : it is the sure way to take your heart off from your private station and way of life, and to make you uneasy and unhappy. It is a thousand to one but, if you were to get into a higher station, you would find it awkward and unsuitable to you, and that you would only want to return again to your former happy independence.

There is no time spent more stupidly, than that which some luxurious people pass in a morning between sleeping and waking, after nature has been fully gratified. He who is awake, may be doing somewhat : he who is asleep, is receiving the refreshment necessary to fit him for action : but the hours spent in dozing and slumbering, can hardly be called existence.

Consider, the most elegant beauty is only a fair skin drawn over a heap of the same flesh, blood, bones, and impurities, which compose the body of the ugliest dunghill-beggar.

If you have made an injudicious friendship, let it sink gently and gradually ; if you blow it up at once, mischief may be the consequence : never disoblige, if you can possibly avoid it.

If

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If you want to try experiments, take care at least, that they be not dangerous ones.

Better not make a present at all, than do it in a pitiful manner : every thing of elegance, is better let alone than clumsily performed.

If you want to keep the good opinion of a great person, whom you find to be a man of understanding ; don't thrust yourself upon him, but let him send for you, when he wants you. Don't pump for his secrets, but stay till he tells you them ; nor offer him your advice unasked ; nor repeat any thing of what passes between you, relating to family, or state-affairs ; nor boast of your intimacy with him ; nor shew yourself ready to sneak and cringe, or to make the enemy of mankind a present of your soul to oblige your patron. If your scheme be, to make your fortune at any rate, put on your boots, and plunge through thick and thin.

It will vex you to lose a friend for a smart stroke of raillery ; or the opinion of the wife and good, for a piece of foolish behaviour at a merry-making.

The more you enlarge your concerns in life, the more chances you will have of embarrassments.

Mankind generally act not according to right ; but more according to present interest ; and most according to present passion : by this key you may generally get into their designs, and foretell what course they will take.

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In estimating the worth of men, keep a guard upon your judgment, that it be not biased by wealth or splendor. At the same time, there is no necessity for treating with a cynical insolence, every person whom Providence hath placed in an eminent station, merely because your experience teaches you, that very few of the great are deserving of the esteem of the wise and good. Consider the temptations which besiege people of distinction, and render it almost impossible for them to come at truth. And make all reasonable allowances. If you see any thing like real goodness of heart in a person of high rank, admire it, as an uncommon instance of excellence, which, in a more private station, would have risen to an extraordinary pitch.

Never write letters about any affair that has occasioned, or may occasion, a difference : a difference looks bigger in a letter than in conversation.

Don't let one failure in a worthy and practicable scheme baffle you : the more difficulty, the more glory.

If you do not set your whole thoughts upon a business, while you are about it, it is ten to one but you mismanage it : if you set your affections immoveably upon worldly things, you will become a sordid earth-worm.

Grief smothered preys upon the vitals : give it vent into the bosom of a friend : but take care that your friend be a person of approved tenderness ;



ness; else he will not administer the balm of sympathy: of tried prudence; else you will not profit by his advice, or consolation: and of experienced secrecy; else you may chance to find yourself betrayed and undone. -

In public places, be cautious of your behaviour: you know not who may have an eye upon you, and afterwards expose your levity, or affectation, where you would least wish it. Nothing can be imagined more nauseous than the public behaviour of many people, who make mighty pretensions to the elegancies of life. To go to church, to a tragedy, or an oratorio, only to disturb all who are within reach of your impertinence, shews a want, not only of common modesty and civility, but of common sense. If you do not come to improve, or to enjoy the entertainment; you can have no rational scheme in view. If you want to play off your fooleries, you have only to go to a rout, where you are sure, nothing of sense, or reasonable entertainment, will have any place, and where consequently you can spoil nothing. As to indecencies in places of public worship, one would think the fear of being struck by the Power to whom such places are dedicated, would a little restrain the public impiety of some people.

Never disoblige servants, if you can avoid it. Low people are often mischievous; and having lived with you, have it in their power to misrepresent and injure you.

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The more servants you keep, the worse you will be served.

Great people think their inferiors do only their duty in serving them : And that they do theirs in rewarding their services with a nod or a smile. The lower part of mankind have minds too fordid to be capable of gratitude. It is therefore chiefly from the middle rank that you may look for a sense and return of kindness, or any thing worthy or laudable.

Do not let your enemy see that he has it in his power to plague you.

Beware of one who has been your enemy, and all of a sudden, no body knows how, or why, grows mighty loving and friendly.

In proposing your business, be rather too full, than too brief, to prevent mistakes. In affairs, of which you are a judge, make the proposal yourself. In cases which you do not understand, wait, if possible, till another makes it to you.

Be fearful of one you have once got the better of. You know not how you may have irritated him ; nor how deeply revenge works in his heart against you. It is better not to seem to have got the advantage of your enemy, when you have.

If you ask a favour, which you had some pretensions to, and meet with a refusal, it will be impolitic to shew that you think yourself ill used. You will act a more prudent part in seeming

satisfied with the reasons given. So you may take another opportunity of soliciting; and, may chance to be successful: for the person, you have obliged, will, if he has any grace, be ashamed, and puzzled to refuse you a second time.

If you are defamed, consider, whether the prosecution of the person, who has injured you, is not more likely to spread the report, than to clear your innocence. If so, your regard for yourself will teach you what course to take.



THE

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THE  
DIGNITY  
OF  
HUMAN NATURE.

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BOOK II.  
OF KNOWLEDGE.

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INTRODUCTION.

HAVING in the former book laid before the young reader a series of directions, with regard to his conduct in most circumstances in life, which, if he will follow, supplying their deficiencies (as it is impossible to frame a system of prudentials, that shall suit all possible cases, without deficiency) by applying to the judicious and experienced for advice in all extraordinary emergencies, and by forming his conduct

duſt by the beſt rules and examples, he will have great reaſon to hope for ſucceſs and credit in life, and to have even his diſappointments and miſfortunes aſcribed, at leaſt by the candid and benevolent, to other cauſes, rather than to error, or miſconduct, on his part; it follows next to proceed to the conſideration of what makes another very conſiderable part of the dignity of human life, to wit, The improvement of the mind by uſeful and ornamental knowledge.

It may be objected, that, as all our knowledge is comparatively but ignorance; it cannot be of much importance that we take the pains to acquire what is of ſo little conſequence, when acquired.

But it is to be obſerved, that our knowledge is ſaid to be inconfiderable only in compariſon with that of ſuperior beings, and that what we can know is not to be named in compariſon with what in the preſent ſtate lies wholly out of our reach. And though this is the caſe not only of our ſhortſighted ſpecies, but alſo of the higheſt archangel in heaven; whoſe comprehension, being ſtill finite, muſt fall infinitely ſhort of the whole extent of knowledge, which in the Divine mind is ſtrictly infinite; yet I believe hardly any man can be found ſo weak, as to deſpiſe the knowledge of an angel, or ſuperior being, or who would not willingly acquire it, if it were poſſible.

If there is a certain meaſure of knowledge, which we are ſure is attainable, becauſe it has  
been

been attained by many of our own species, must we despise it, because we know, there are vast tracts of science, to which human sagacity cannot reach? Must we fall out with our eyes, because they cannot take in the ken of an angel? Must we resolve not to make use of them to see our way here on earth, because they are not acute enough to shew us whether there are any inhabitants in the moon?

Truth may be compared to gold or diamonds in the mine, the smallest fragment of which is valuable. And, if one had the offer of all the gold dust, or all the small diamonds of a mine, I believe he would hardly reject it, because he could not have the working of the rich vein wholly to himself. Truth is the proper object of the understanding, as food is the nourishment of the body. Less important truths are still worth searching for. Truths of great importance are worth any labour the finding them may cost.

It is, therefore, plainly one thing to be conceited of any acquisitions we can make in knowledge, and another, to despise those that are within our power. There is no doubt but the most enlightened angel above is less conceited of the vast treasures of knowledge he possesses, than a student in his first year at the university is of the crude and indigested smattering he has gained. Nor is there any room to doubt, that knowledge is more esteemed by those sagacious beings, who best know the value of it, than by our short-

fought species, who have gone such inconsiderable lengths in it.

The present is by no means an age for indulging ignorance. A person, who thinks to have any credit among mankind, or to make any figure in conversation, must absolutely resolve to take some pains to improve himself. We find more true knowledge at present in shops and counting-houses, than could have been found an age or two ago in universities. For the bulk of the knowledge of those times consisted in subtle distinctions, laborious disquisitions, and endless disputes about words. The universal diffusion of knowledge, which we observe at present among all ranks of people, took its rise from the publishing those admirable essays, the *Spectator*, *Tatler*, and *Guardian*, in which learned subjects were, by the elegant and ingenious authors, cleared of the scholastic rubbish of Latin and Logic, represented in a familiar style, and treated in a manner which people of plain common sense might comprehend. The practice of exhibiting courses of experiments in *London*, and other great cities, which was first introduced by *Whiston*, *Desaguliers*, and others, has likewise greatly contributed to the spreading a taste for knowledge among the trading people, who now talk familiarly of things, their grandfathers would have thought it as much as their credit was worth, to have been thought to know.

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There is indeed great danger, lest the flood of luxury and vice, which over-runs the nation, go on increasing, till it destroy all that is truly noble and valuable in the people. I need not say danger. There is not the least doubt, but the debauchery of modern times will shortly make an end, either of the nation or of itself. The histories of all the states of former times, where luxury has prevailed, sufficiently shew what we have to expect. However, at present, it is absolutely necessary, in order to be on a foot with others, that we take a little pains to improve ourselves, especially in those parts of knowledge, which enter commonly into conversation, as morals, history, and physiology.

Nothing makes a greater difference between one being and another, than different degrees of knowledge. The mind of an ignorant person is an absolute void. That of a wrong-headed person may be compared to a town sacked by an enemy, where all is overturned, and nothing in its proper state or place. That of a wise man is a magazine richly furnished. There important truths are stored up in such regular arrangement, that reflection sees at once through a whole series of subjects, and observes distinctly their relations and connections. We may consider the mind of an angelic being as a vast palace, in which are various magazines stored with sublime truths, the contemplation of whose connections, relations and various beauties, must afford a happiness



ness to us inconceivable. The Divine mind (if it may be allowed us to attempt to form any faint idea of the Original of all perfection) may be considered as the immense and unbounded treasure of all truth, where the original ideas of all things that ever have been, that now are, and that ever shall be, or that are barely possible, are continually present; the continual contemplation of which infinitude of things, with the infinite beauties resulting from their various relations and connexions, must (if we may take the liberty of the expression) afford infinite entertainment and delight.

Thus, in proportion to the rank which any being holds in the universe, such are his views, and his comprehension of things. And I know not whether the difference be greater betwixt the most enlightened of our species, and the lowest order of angelic beings, than downward from the most knowing of our species to the most ignorant. To compare an illiterate clown, or even a nobleman sunk in sensuality and ignorance (for it is the same thing whether you choose out of the great vulgar or the small) with a *Newton*, or a *Clarke*; to compare, I say, two minds, of which the one is wholly blind and insensible to every thing above the mere animal functions, of which a brute is as capable as he; and the other is raised habitually above the regards of sense, and is employed in the contemplation of great and sublime truths, in searching into the glorious

glorious works of his Almighty Maker in the natural world, and his profound scheme of government in the moral, and, by the force of a stupendous sagacity, is able to penetrate into, and lay open to others, truths seemingly beyond human reach ; by knowing more of the Divine works, is capable of forming more just conceptions of the glorious Author of all, and consequently of paying him a more rational obedience and devotion, and of approaching nearer to him ; to compare two minds so immensely different in their capacities and endowments, what likeness appears, to determine us to regard them as of the same species, and not rather to pronounce the one an angel and the other a brute ?

We see, therefore, that, though there may be no room for pride or self-conceit on account of our attainments in knowledge, since the highest pitch we can possibly soar to, will be but inconsiderable, in comparison with what we never can reach ; yet there is a great deal of room for laudable ambition ; since we see it is possible to excel the bulk of our species, for any thing we know, almost as much as an angel does a brute.

All endowments and acquisitions must have a beginning. Time was, when *Sir Isaac Newton* did not know the letters of the alphabet. And the time may, and, no doubt, will come, when the meanest of my readers, if he makes a proper use of the natural abilities, and providential advantages,

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vantages, given him, and studies to gain His favour, in whose disposal all gifts and endowments are, will exceed not only the pitch, to which the above-mentioned prodigy of our species reached; but will rise to a station above that, which the highest archangel in heaven fills at present, tho' the distance must still continue. And no one knows what immense advantage it may be of, to have endeavoured, even in this imperfect state, to get our minds opened, by the access of new ideas and views; to have habituated ourselves to examine, to compare, to reflect, and distinguish. It is evident that all these exercises of the understanding must be absolutely necessary in any future state whatever, for enlarging the sphere of our knowledge, and ennobling our minds. And what an advantage must it be for future states, to have begun the work here, that is to be carried on to eternity? To what end does religion, and even reason, direct us to mortify our passions and appetites, to habituate our minds to the contemplation of those high and heavenly things we hope to come one day to the enjoyment of? No doubt, it is necessary in the nature of things that our minds in their present infant state (as this may very properly be called) be formed and disciplined, by custom and habit, to that temper and character, which is to be hereafter their glory, their perfection, and their happiness. Transfer the view from practice to knowledge, and you will find,

that

that the analogy will hold good there likewise. It is necessary that we cultivate to the utmost all the faculties of our souls in the present state, in order to their arriving at higher degrees of perfection hereafter. And no rational mind ever will, or can, rise to any high degree of perfection in any state whatever, and continue in ignorance. For if the definition of a rational mind be, "A being endowed with understanding and "will" (I mention only the two principal faculties) there is no doubt, but it is equally necessary to the perfection, and consequently to the happiness of every rational being, that its understanding be enlarged and improved by knowledge, as that its will be formed and directed by a sense of duty. To put the matter upon its proper foot, we ought to consider the improvement of every faculty of our minds as a part of virtue, of which afterwards. And in doing so, we shall find, that there ought to be no distinction between the love of knowledge and of virtue, it being evident, that the proper improvement and due conduct of the understanding is an indispensable part of the duty of every rational being. Just sentiments of the supreme Governor of the world, of our own nature and state, of the fitness and propriety of moral good, and the fatal effects of irregularity, are the only sure foundation of goodness. Now to attain full and clear notions of these, it will be necessary to make pretty extensive enquiries, to carry our researches

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a considerable way into the works of God, from whence we draw the clearest conceptions of his nature and attributes ; to study our own nature and state, with the various passions, appetites, and inclinations, which enter into our constitution ; the connections and relations we stand in to one another ; and the different natures and consequences of actions, according to the motives they spring from, and the circumstances which diversify them. All this, I say, will be of immense advantage for raising us above vice, and confirming us in a steady course of virtue, which is the direct tendency of all true knowledge, and the effect it never fails to produce in every honest and uncorrupted mind.

And though it must be owned, that an illiterate day-labourer, who earns his living by hedging and ditching, who is devout toward his God, and benevolent to his neighbour, is a much nobler and more valuable being in the sight of his Maker, than the most accomplished courtier, who supports his grandeur by the wages of iniquity ; nay, though it is evident, that great knowledge will even make a wicked being the worse, as it enables him to be more extensively wicked ; it does not therefore follow, that knowledge is of no consequence to virtue ; but only that vice is of so fatal and destructive a nature, as to poison and pervert the best things, where it enters. If the above day-labourer, by the mere  
goodness

goodness of his heart, may be acceptable to God, and esteemed by all good men, how much higher might he have risen, with the addition of extensive improvements in knowledge? Could ever a *Woollaston* or a *Cudworth* have formed such just, or such sublime notions of virtue and of spiritual things? could they ever have arrived at the pitch of goodness themselves reached, or could they have represented it in the amiable lights they have done, so as to gain others to the study and practice of it, without extensively-improved abilities?

Enough, methinks, has therefore been said to invite readers, especially the younger sort, to engage in the truly noble and worthy labour of improving their minds, rather than indulging their senses; of cultivating the immortal part, rather than pampering the body; of aspiring to a resemblance of the nature of angels, rather than sinking themselves to the rank of the brutes.

It is amazing and delightful to consider, what seemingly difficult things are done by means of human knowledge, scanty and confined as it is. The wonders performed by means of reading and writing, are so striking, that some learned men have given it as their opinion, that the whole was communicated to mankind originally by some superior being. That by means of the various compositions of about twenty different articulations of the human voice, performed by the assistance

sistence of the lungs, the glottis, the tongue, the lips, and the teeth, ideas of all sensible and intelligible objects in nature, in art, in science, in history, in morals, in supernaturals, should be communicable from one mind to another; and again, that signs should be contrived, by which those articulations of the human voice should be expressed, so as to be communicable from one mind to another by the eye; this seems really beyond the reach of humanity, left to itself. To imagine, for example, the first of mankind, capable of inventing any set of sounds, which should be fit to communicate to one another the idea of what is meant by the words *virtue* or *rectitude*, or any other idea wholly unconnected with any kind of sound whatever, and afterwards of inventing a set of signs, which should give the mind, by the eye, an idea of what is properly an object of the sense of hearing (as a word, when expressed with the voice, represents an idea, which is the mere object of the understanding) to imagine mankind, in the first ages of the world, without any hint from superior beings, capable of this, seems doing too great honour to our nature. Be that as it will; that one man should, by uttering a set of sounds no way connected with, or naturally representative of, one set of ideas more than another; that one man should, by such seemingly unfit means, enlighten the understanding, rouse the passions, delight, or terrify

rify the imagination of another; and that he should not only be able to do this when present, *visu voce*; but that he should produce the same effect by a set of figures no way naturally fit to represent either the ideas he would communicate, or (less still) the articulate sounds, which are themselves but representatives of ideas; and that he should affect another person at pleasure, at the distance of five thousand miles, and with as much precision and accuracy as if he were upon the spot, nay, as if he could open to him his mind, and give him to apprehend the ideas as they lie there in their original state, is truly admirable. The translating (so to speak) ideas into sounds, the translating those sounds into visible objects, the translating one set of those visible objects into another; or turning one language into another, as *Hebrew, Greek, or Latin, into English*; all this, if we were not familiar with it, would appear a sort of magic; but our being accustomed to it does not lessen its real excellence.

Again, if we consider what strange things are commonly done by every novice in numbers, we cannot help admiring the excellence of knowledge. To tell an *Indian*, that a boy of twelve years of age could, by making a few scrawls upon paper, determine the number of barley-corns, which would go round the globe of the earth; would strangely startle him. To talk to one unacquainted with the first principles of arithmetic, of adding together a set of numbers, as five



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Did one hear a vicious person expressing his contempt of honesty and virtue, should we think the more meanly of them, or of him? In the same manner, when a shallow fop sneers at what he does not understand, his low raillery ought to cast no reflexion upon learning; but he is to be considered as sunk from the dignity of reason, and so far degenerate as to make his ignorance his pride, which ought to be his shame.

If we cast our eyes backward upon past times; or if we take a view of the present state of the world, if we consider whole nations, or single persons, nothing so fills the imagination, or engages the attention, as the conspicuous and illustrious honours of knowledge and learning. The ancient *Egyptians*, the fathers of wisdom; the studious *Athenians*, the cultivators of every elegant art; the wise *Romans*, the zealous imitators of learned *Greece*; how come these nations to shine, like constellations, through the deeps of that universal mist which involves the rest of antiquity? How come the *Pythagoras's*, the *Aristotle's*, the *Tully's*, the *Livy's* to appear, even to us at this distance, as stars of the first magnitude in the vast fields of æther? How comes it that *Afric*, since the setting of learning in that quarter of the world, has been the habitation of obscurity and cruelty? What is the disgrace of wild *Indians*, and swinish *Hottentots*? Is it not their brutish ignorance? What makes our island to differ so much from the aspect it had when

*Julius*

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*Julius Cæsar* landed on our coast, and found us a flock of painted savages, scampering naked thro' the woods? What nation makes such an appearance now, as *England*, wherever knowledge is valued? What names of ancient warriors make so great a figure on the roll of fame, or shine so bright in wisdom's eye, as those of the improvers of arts and sciences, who have arisen in our island? Who would not rather, in our times, who know to despise romantic heroism, choose to have his name enrolled with those of a *Bacon*, a *Boyle*, a *Clarke*, or a *Newton*, the friends of mankind, the guides to truth, the improvers of the human mind, the honours of our nature, and our world; than to have a place among the *Alexanders*, the *Cæsars*, the *Lewis's*, or the *Charles's*, the scourges and butchers of their fellow-creatures?

### S E C T. I.

*Of Education from Infancy. Absolute Necessity, and proper Method, of laying a Foundation of Moral Knowledge.*

**H**AVING already treated in part, of so much of the education of young children as falls under the care of the parents, I will now, for the sake of exhibiting at once a comprehensive view of the whole improvement of the mind,

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begin from infancy itself; and lay down a general plan of knowledge, and the method of acquiring it. And I doubt not but the reader will own, that a genius naturally good, and which has been cultivated in the manner here to be described, may be said to have had most of the advantages necessary for attaining the highest perfection of human nature, of which this state is capable.

First, and above all things, it is to be remembered, and cannot be too often inculcated, that, from the time a child can speak, throughout the whole course of education, the forming of the temper to meekness and obedience, regulating the passions and appetites, and habituating the mind to the love and practice of virtue, is the great, the constant, and growing labour, without which all other culture is absolute trifling. Nor is this to be done by fits and starts, nor this most important of all knowledge to be superficially or partially communicated. Every obligation of morality; every duty of life; every beauty of virtue, and deformity of vice, is to be particularly set forth, and represented in every different light. It is not a few scraps of good things got by memory, nor a few particular lessons given from time to time, that can be called a religious education. Without laying before the young mind a rational, a complete and perfect system of morals, and of Christianity, the work will be defective and unfinished. These important  
 lessons

lessons must be begun early ; constantly inculcated ; never lost sight of ; raised from every occasion and opportunity ; improved and enlarged as reason opens ; worked into every faculty of the soul ; begun by parents ; carried on by the master or tutor ; established by the man himself, when of age to enquire and to act for himself ; studied every day and every hour, while one faculty remains capable of exerting itself in the mind ; and the man, when full of years, must still proceed, and at last go out of the world engaged in the important study of his duty, and means for attaining the happiness and perfection for which he was brought into being.

The knowledge of morality and Christianity is the absolutely indispensable part of education. For what avails it how knowing a person is in speculative science, if he knows not how to be useful and happy ? If this work be neglected in the earlier part of life, it must be owing to some very favourable circumstances, if the person turns out well afterwards. For the human mind resembles a piece of ground, which will by no means lie wholly bare ; but will either bring forth weeds or fruits, according as it is cultivated or neglected. And according as the habits of vice and irreligion, or the contrary, get the first possession of the mind, such is the future man like to be.

We see that the gross superstitions and monstrous absurdities of popery, by the mere circum-

stance of their being early planted in the mind, are not to be eradicated afterwards, though it is certain, that, as reason opens, and the judgment matures, they must appear still more and more shocking. With how great advantage, then, may we establish in the minds of young ones the principles of a religion strictly rational, and that will appear the more so, the more it is examined.

It is plain, that early youth is the fittest season of life for establishing first principles of any kind, because then the mind is wholly disengaged from the pursuits which afterwards take possession of it. And the knowledge of right and wrong is indeed the most level to all capacities of any science whatever. For we are properly moral agents, and are naturally qualified with sufficient abilities to understand the obligations of morality, when laid before us, if we can but be prevailed with to observe them in our practice; for which purpose the most effectual method, no doubt, is to have them early inculcated upon us.

We do not think it proper to leave our children to themselves, to find out the sciences of grammar, or numbers, or the knowledge of languages, or the art of writing, or of a profession to live by. And shall we leave them to settle the boundaries of right and wrong by their own sagacity; or to neglect, or misunderstand, a religion, which God himself has condescended to give us, as the rule of our faith and practice?

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What can it signify to a youth, that he go through all the liberal sciences, if he is ignorant of the rules by which he ought to live, and by which he is to be judged at last. Will *Greek* and *Latin* alone gain him the esteem of the wise and virtuous? or will philosophy and mathematics save his soul?

I know of but one objection against the importance of what I am urging, which is taken from the deplorable degeneracy, we sometimes observe the children of pious and virtuous parents run into, who have had the utmost pains taken with them, to give them a turn to virtue and goodness.

But is it not in some cases to be feared, that parents, through a mistaken notion of the true method of giving youth a religious turn, often run into the extreme of surfeiting them with religious exercises, instead of labouring chiefly to enlighten and convince their understandings, and to form their tempers to obedience. The former, though noble and valuable helps appointed by Divine Wisdom for promoting virtue and goodness, may yet be so managed as to disgust a young mind, and prejudice it against religion for life; but the latter, properly conducted, will prove an endlessly various entertainment. There is not a duty of morality, you can have occasion to inculcate, but what may give an opportunity of raising some entertaining observation, or introducing some amusing history; and no-  
 thing

thing can be more striking than the accounts of supernatural things, of which Holy Scripture is full. And though it may sometimes happen, that a youth well brought up may, by the force of temptation, run into fatal errors in after-life, yet such a one, it must be owned, has a much better chance of recovering the right way, than one, who never was put in it. I am ashamed to add any more upon the head; it being a kind of affront to the understandings of mankind, to labour to convince them of a truth as evident as that the sun shines at noon-day.

That it may unquestionably appear to be fully practicable for a parent, or tutor, to establish youth, from the tenderest years, in principles of virtue and religion, by reason, not by authority, by understanding, not by rote; I will here add a sketch of what I know may be taught with success.

A parent, in any station of life whatever, may, and ought to bestow some time every day, in instructing his children in the most useful of all knowledge. Half an hour, or an hour every day, will be sufficient to go through a great deal of such sort of work in a year. And what parent will pretend, that he cannot find half an hour a day for the most important of all business? At three or four years of age, a child of ordinary parts is capable of being shewn and convinced, "That obedience is better than perverseness; "that good nature is more amiable than peevishness;

“ nefs ; that knowledge is preferable to igno-  
 “ rance ; that it is wicked to dissemble, to use  
 “ any one ill, to be cruel to birds, or insects ;  
 “ that it is wrong to do any thing to ano-  
 “ ther, which one would not wish done to one’s  
 “ self ; that the world was made by One who is  
 “ very great, wise, and good, who is every  
 “ where, and knows every thing that is thought,  
 “ spoke, or done by men ; that there will be a  
 “ time when all, that ever lived, will be judged  
 “ by God ; and that they, who have been good,  
 “ will go to heaven among the angels, and they  
 “ who have been wicked, to hell among evil  
 “ spirits.”

There are few children of three or four years of age, who are not capable of having their understandings opened, and their minds formed, by such simple principles as these : and these, simple as they seem, are the ground-work of morality and religion.

As the faculties strengthen, farther views may by degrees be presented to the opening mind ; and every lesson illustrated and inculcated by instances taken from the Bible, and other books, or from characters known to the teacher. The asking questions upon every head, and bringing in little familiar stories proper for the occasion, will keep up a young one’s attention, and make such exercises extremely entertaining, without which they will not be useful.

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Besides all set hours for instruction, a prudent parent will contrive to apply as much spare time as possible that way, and to bring in some useful and instructive hint on every occasion ; to moralize upon the blowing of a feather, and read a lecture on a pile of grass, or a flower.

Can any one think, that such a method of giving " line upon line, precept upon precept, here a " little and there a little," is likely to miss having a considerable effect upon the mind, for leading it to an early habit of attending to the nature and consequences of actions, of desiring to please, and fearing to offend, which if people could but be brought to accustom themselves to from their youth, they would never, in after-life, act the rash and desperate part we see many do.

Nor is there any thing to hinder a master of a *private* place of education to bestow generally an hour every day, and more on Sundays, in instructing the youth under his care in the principles of prudence, morality, and religion. This may be digested into a scheme of twenty or thirty lectures, beginning from the very foundation, and going through all the principal particulars of our duty to God, our neighbour, and ourselves, and from thence proceeding to a view of the fundamental doctrines, evidences, and laws of revealed religion. In all which there is nothing but what may be brought down to the apprehension of very young minds, by proceeding

ceeding gently, and suiting one's expressions to the weak capacities of the learners, doing all by way of question, without which it is impossible to keep up their attention, and in the manner of familiar dialogue, rather than set harangue, or magisterial precept.

Above all things care ought to be taken, that religious knowledge be as little as possible put on the foot of a task. A parent, or teacher, who communicates his instructions of this kind in such a manner, as to tire or disgust the young mind, though he may mean well, does more harm than good. A young person will have a better chance for taking to a course of virtue and religion, if left wholly to himself, than if set against them by a wrong method of education. The mind, like a spring, if unnaturally forced one way, will, when let loose, recoil so much the more violently the contrary way.

The first Sunday-evening's conversation, between the master and pupils in a place of education, might be upon happiness in general. Questions might be put to the eldest of the youth, as, whether they did not desire to secure their own happiness in the most effectual way; or if they would be content to be happy for a few years, and take their chance afterwards. They might be asked, what they thought happiness consisted in, if in good eating, drinking, play, and fine cloaths only; or whether they did not think a creature capable of thought, of doing

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ing good or evil, and of living for ever in a future state, ought to make some provision of a happiness suitable to its spiritual part. For illustrating this, they might be asked wherein they thought the respective happiness of a beast, a man, and an angel consisted. They might be taught partly what makes the difference of those natures, and some general account given them of the nature of man, his faculties, passions, and appetites. They might be asked, whether they did not think, that the only certain means for attaining the greatest happiness, mankind are capable of, was to endeavour to gain the favour of God, who has all possible happiness in his power.

The next Sunday-evening's conversation might be upon the most likely means for gaining the favour of God, in order to securing happiness. The youth might be asked, whether they did not think there was a difference in the conduct of different persons, and in the effects of their behaviour upon the affairs of the world. Instances might be made use of, to shew in general, that the natural tendency of a virtuous behaviour is to diffuse happiness, and that vice naturally produces confusion and misery. They might be asked, what would be the consequence, if all men gave themselves to drunkenness, and other kinds of intemperance; or to cruelty and violence; and might be made to see, that if all men were wicked, the world could by no means subsist. From thence, they might be led on to conclude, that it was to be expected, vice would always be

displeasing to God; that consequently, none but the virtuous could reasonably expect to be finally happy, however they might be suffered to pass through the present life. They might then be shewn, that all the good or bad actions of men must relate either to themselves, to their fellow-creatures, or to God. And that whatever action can have no effect either upon one's self, or any other person, and is neither pleasing nor displeasing to God, cannot be called either virtuous or vicious.

The subject of the third evening's conversation, might be the introduction to the first head of duty, viz. that which relates to ourselves. The youth might be shewn the propriety of beginning with that, as it is necessary toward a person's behaving well to others, that his own mind be in good order. They might be taught, that our duty to ourselves consists in the due care of our minds, and of our bodies. They might be asked, whether they did not think the understanding was to be improved with useful knowledge; the memory cultivated and habituated for retaining important truth; the will subdued to obedience; and the passions subjected to the authority of reason. They might be shewn in a few general instances, what would be the consequence, if none of these was to be done; what a condition the mind must be in, which is neglected, and suffered to run to absolute mischief. They might then be informed briefly of the

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the uses and ends of the passions, and their proper conduct.

The conversation the fourth, and one or two succeeding evenings, might proceed to the necessity and means of regulating the several passions; whose excess, and the bad consequences of such excess, might be pointed out. The passions not to be rooted up; but put under proper regulations. Excess in the indulgence of them, how first run into, and cautions to guard against it. Of self-love, self-opinion or pride, ambition, anger, envy, malice, revenge, and the rest, of which, as I shall have occasion to treat pretty copiously in the third book, I shall add nothing further at present; but refer the reader thither, for a method of treating of them, which may with advantage be used in instructing youth, excluding what may be thought too abstract for their apprehension. For masters are to proceed with prudence, according to the various capacities of the youth under their care; never taking it for granted, that such or such parts of moral knowledge are beyond their reach; but putting their capacities to a thorough trial, which will shew, contrary to common opinion, how early the human mind is capable of comprehending very noble and extensive moral views.

To treat of the due regulation of the bodily appetites, as they are commonly called, will be employment for several evenings. The love of life, of riches, of food, of strong liquors, of sleep,  
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of the opposite sex (a subject to be very slightly touched on) of diversions; of finery; the due regulation of each of these is to be pointed out, and the fatal consequences of too great an indulgence of them, as strongly as possible set forth; with cautions against the snares by which young people are first led into sensuality, and methods of prevention, or reformation. Of all which I shall likewise have occasion to treat in the third book. The virtues contrary to the excessive indulgence of passion and appetite, ought to be strongly recommended, as humility, meekness, moderation in desires, consideration, and contentment. And it is not enough, that young persons understand theoretically wherein a good disposition of mind consists. They are to be held to the strict observance of it in their whole behaviour. One instance of malice, cruelty, or deceit, is a fault more necessary to be punished, than the neglect of some hundreds of tasks. And it must appear to every understanding, that the keeping a youth under proper regulations, even by mechanical means, is of great advantage, as he will thereby be habituated to what is good, and must find a vicious course unnatural to him. And there is no doubt, but the minds of youth may be rationally, as well as mechanically, formed to virtue, by the prudent conduct and instructions of masters, where parents will give their concurrence and sanction.

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Several evenings may be employed in giving the youth a view of our duty to our neighbour, under which the relative duties ought to be considered ; and particularly that fundamental, but now unknown virtue of the love of our country, very strongly recommended. Materials, and a method of instructing the youth in the duties of negative and positive justice, and benevolence, may be drawn from what will be said on social virtue in the third book.

Young people of good understanding may be rationally convinced of the certainty of the Divine existence, by a set of arguments not too abstract, but yet convincing. The proof *a posteriori*, as it is commonly called, is the fittest to be dwelt upon, and is fully level to the capacity of a youth of parts at fourteen years of age. An idea of the Supreme Being, a set of useful moral reflexions upon his perfections, and an account of the duty we owe him, may be drawn from what is said on that subject in the following book.

To habituate young people to reason on moral subjects, to teach them to exert their faculties in comparing, examining, and reflecting, is doing them one of the greatest services that can be imagined. And as there is no real merit in taking religion on trust ; but on the contrary, a reasonable mind cannot be better employed, than in examining into sacred truth ; and as nothing is likely to produce a lasting effect upon the mind, but what the mind is clearly convinced of;

of; on these, and all other accounts, it is absolutely necessary that young people be early taught to consider the Christian religion, not as a matter of mere form, handed down from father to son; or as a piece of superstition, consisting in being baptized, and called after the Author of our religion; but as a subject of reasoning, a system of doctrines to be clearly understood, a set of facts established on unquestionable evidence, a body of laws given by Divine authority, which are to better the hearts, and regulate the lives of men. To give the youth at a place of education a comprehensive view of only the heads of what they ought to be taught of the Christian religion, will very nobly and usefully employ several evenings. The particulars to be insisted on may be drawn from the fourth book.

The whole course may conclude with an explanation of our Saviour's discourse on the mount, *Matth.* v, vi, and vii, which contains the Christian law, or rule of life, and is infinitely more proper to be committed to memory by youth, than all the catechisms that ever were, or will be composed.

This may be a proper place to mention, that from the earliest years, youth ought to be accustomed to the most reasonable of all services, I mean worshipping God. It is no matter how short the devotions, they use, may be, so they offer them with decency and understanding: without which they had better let them alone; for they will be a prejudice instead of an advantage to them.



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Besides all other improvements, endeavours ought to be used to lead young persons to study, to love, and to form themselves by the holy Scriptures, the fountain of knowledge, and rule of life. For this purpose, some of the time allotted for moral instruction, in a seminary of learning, may be interchangeably bestowed in reading, commenting, and questioning the youth upon select parts of Scripture, as the account of the creation, and flood, the remarkable characters of *Noah*, *Lot*, and *Abraham*, the miraculous history of the people of *Israel*, the moral writings of *Solomon*, some of the most remarkable prophecies, with accounts of their completions, the Gospel-history, and the moral parts of the epistles. An hour every morning may be very well employed in this manner.

A course of such instructions continued, repeated, and improved upon, for a series of years, will furnish the young mind with a treasure of the most valuable and sublime knowledge, and must, with the Divine blessing, give it a cast toward the virtuous side, which it must at least find some *difficulty* in getting the better of in after-life.

For any man to put himself at the head of a place of education, who is not tolerably qualified for explaining the nature and obligations of morality, and who has not some critical knowledge of Scripture, is intolerable arrogance and wickedness. And that teacher of youth, who does not consider the forming of the moral character

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rafter of his pupils, as the great and indispensable part of his duty, has not yet learned the first principles of his art.

### S E C T. II.

*Intention, and Method of Education. Concurrence of the Parents necessary.*

**T**HE sooner a boy is sent from home for his education, the better. For though the parents themselves should be abundantly capable of judging of, and resolute enough to keep up, a proper conduct to the child, which is very seldom the case, yet there will always be enough of silly relations coming and going, and of visitants flattering and humouring him in all his weaknesses; which, though they be entertaining, as indeed every thing is from a pretty child, ought without all question to be eradicated as soon as possible, instead of being encouraged. The very servants will make it their business to teach him a thousand monkey's tricks, and to blame the parents for every reproof or correction they use, though ever so seasonable and necessary.

It is surprising that ever a question should have been made, whether an education at home or abroad, was to be chosen. In a home-education, it is plain that the advantage arising from emulation, the importance of which is not to be conceived, must be lost. It is likewise obvious, that by a home-education a youth misses all the advantage of being accustomed to the company of

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his equals, and being early hardened, by the little rubs, he will from time to time meet with from them, against those he must lay his account with meeting in life, which a youth, who goes directly out of his mother's lap into the wide world, is by no means prepared to grapple with, nor even to bear the sight of strange faces, nor to eat, drink, or lodge differently from the manner he has been used to at his father's house. A third great disadvantage of a home-education, is the missing a number of useful and valuable friendships, a youth might have contracted at school, which, being begun in the innocent and disinterested time of life, often hold through the whole of it, and prove of the most important advantage. The sooner a young person goes from the solitary state of home into the social life of a place of education, the sooner he has an opportunity of knowing what it is to be a member of society, of seeing a difference between a right and a wrong behaviour, of learning how to conduct himself among his equals, and in short, the sooner he is likely, under proper regulations, to become a formed man.

The view of education is not to carry the pupils a great length in each different science ; but only to open their minds for the reception of various knowledge, of which the first seeds and principles are to be planted early, while the mind is flexible, and disengaged from a multiplicity of ideas and pursuits. Those seeds and principles

ples are afterwards to be cultivated by the man, when grown up, and, by means of constant diligence and application, may be expected, thro' length of time, to produce the noblest and most valuable fruits. From hence it is evident, what constitutes the character of a person properly qualified for being at the head of the education of youth. Not so much a deep skill in languages only, or in mathematics only, or in any single branch of knowledge, exclusive of the rest. But a general and comprehensive knowledge of the various branches of learning, and the proper methods of acquiring them, with clear and just notions of human nature, of morals, and revealed religion.

The most perfect scheme, that has yet been found out, or is possible for the whole education of youth, from six years of age and upwards, is where a person properly qualified, with an unexceptionable character for gentleness of temper and exemplary virtue, good breeding, knowledge of the world, and of languages, writing, accounts, book-keeping, geography, the principles of philosophy, mathematics, history, and divinity, and who is disengaged from all other pursuits; employs himself and proper assistants, wholly in the care and instruction of a competent number of youth placed in his own house, and under his own eye, in such a manner, as to accomplish them in all the branches of useful and ornamental knowledge, suitable to their ages, capacities,

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and prospects, and especially in the knowledge of what will make them useful in this life, and secure the happiness of the next.

There is no one advantage in any other conceivable plan of education, which may not be gained in this, nor any one disadvantage, that may not be as effectually avoided in this way as in any. If there is any thing good in a child, it may in this method of education be improved to the highest pitch; if there is any thing bad, it cannot be long unknown, and may be remedied, if it is remediable; if a child has a bright capacity, there is emulation, honour, and reward, to encourage him to make the best of it; and if his faculties be low, there are proper methods for putting him upon using his utmost diligence; and there is opportunity to give him private assistance at by-hours, to enable him to keep nearly upon a footing with others of his age. In such a place of education, the master has it in his power, by assiduity and diligence, to make the highest improvements upon the youth under his care, both in human and divine knowledge; and, by a tender and affectionate treatment of them, may gain the love, the esteem, and the obedience due to a parent, rather than a master. Such a place of education is indeed no way different from another private house, only, that instead of three or four, or half a dozen children, there may be thirty or forty in family. Instead of an indulgent parent, who might fondle or  
spoil

spoil the youth, there is at the head of such an oeconomy an impartial and prudent governor, who, not being biaſſed by paternal weakneſs, is likely to conſult, in the moſt diſintereſted manner, their real advantage. Having no other ſcheme in his head, nor any thing elſe to engage his thoughts, he is at liberty, which few parents are, to beſtow his whole time upon the improvement of the youth under his care. Having no other dependence for raiſing himſelf in life, he is likely to apply himſelf in good earneſt to do whatever he can for the advantage of the youth, and his own reputation; as knowing that, tho' foundations, exhibitions, fellowſhips, and preferments, will always draw pupils to public ſchools and univerſities, it is quite otherwiſe with a private place of education, which muſt depend wholly upon real and ſubſtantial care and viſible improvement of the youth; and that a failure of theſe muſt be the ruin of his credit and fortune. And ſuppoſing a competent ſett of duly-qualified teachers employed in ſuch a place of education, it is plain, that there is no part of improvement to be had at any kind of ſchool, academy, or univerſity, which may not be taken in, and carried to the utmoſt length, the pupils are capable of, according to their age, and natural parts.

This is, indeed, in the main, the great *Milton's* plan of a place of education to carry youth from grammar quite to the finiſhing of their ſtudies. In which the very circumſtance of a perſon's being

ing brought up under the same authority from childhood to mature age, is of inestimable advantage. When a child is first put to a silly old woman to learn to read, or rather murder his book, what a number of bad habits does he acquire, all which must afterwards be unlearned? When from thence he is removed to a public, or boarding-school, with what contempt does he look back upon his poor old mistress, and how saucily does he talk of her? The case is the same, when he is removed from school to the university. Then my young master thinks himself a man, finds himself at his own disposal, and resolves to make use of that liberty, which no person ought to be trusted with before years of discretion. And the consequences are generally seen to answer accordingly. But a youth, who has been brought up from childhood to ripe age, under the same person, supposing him properly qualified, acquires in time the affection and the sense of authority of a son to a parent, rather than of a pupil to a master, than which nothing can more, or so much, contribute to his improvement in learning, or to the forming of his manners.

Whether there are not some particulars in the very constitution and plan of certain places of education, that may be said to be fundamentally wrong, I shall leave to better judgments, after setting down a few queries on the subject.

Whether the most perfect knowledge of two dead languages is, to any person whatever, let  
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his views in life be what they will, worth the expence of ten years study, to the exclusion of all other improvements?

Whether, in order to a thorough knowledge of *Latin* and *Greek*, there is any real necessity for learning by rote a number of crabbed grammar rules? And whether the same method which is commonly used in teaching *French* and *Italian* (in which it is notorious that people do actually acquire as great, or rather a greater mastery) would not be as effectual, and incomparably more compendious, for acquiring a sufficient knowledge of *Latin* or *Greek*? I mean, only learning to decline nouns and verbs, and a few rules of construction, and then reading books in the language.

Whether the superfluous time, bestowed in learning grammar rules, would not be much better employed in writing, arithmetic, elements of mathematics, or other improvements of indispensable use in life? especially as it may be farther asked.

Whether the neglect of the first principles of those valuable parts of knowledge, till the more tractable years of youth are past (all for the sake of *Latin* and *Greek*), is not in experience found to be a great and irreparable loss to those who have been educated in that imperfect method? And whether they do not find it extremely hard, if not impossible, in after-life, to acquire a perfect knowledge of what they were not in early youth sufficiently grounded in?

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Whether the time spent in making *Latin* themes and verses is not wholly thrown away? Whether *English* people do not commonly acquire a very sufficient knowledge of *French* and *Italian*, without ever thinking of making verses in those languages? Whether putting a youth, not yet out of his teens, upon composition of any kind, is at all reasonable? Whether it is not requiring him to produce what, from his unripe age and uninformed judgment, is not to be supposed to be in him, I mean, thought? Whether the proper employment of those tender years is not rather planting, than reaping? Whether therefore it would not be a more useful exercise to set a youth of fifteen to translate, paraphrase, comment upon, or make abstracts from the productions of masterly hands, than to put him upon producing any thing of his own?

Whether any knowledge of the learned languages, besides being qualified to understand the sense, and relish the beauties, of an antient author, be of any use? and whether the making of themes or verses does at all contribute to that end?

Whether, in a seminary of learning, where some hundreds of youth are together, it is by any human means possible to prevent their corrupting one another, undistinguished, and undiscovered? Whether it is by any human means possible to find out the real characters, the laudable or faulty turns of disposition in such a number of youth, or to apply particularly to  
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the correction or encouragement of each fault or weakness, as they may respectively require \* ?

It is not to be expected that the business of education should go on to purpose, unless parents resolve to allow a gentleman, properly qualified for the important trust to be reposed in him, such an income as may be sufficient to enable him to carry on his scheme without uneasiness and anxiety, to support proper assistants, and to furnish himself with books, and the other apparatus necessary for the improvement of the youth under his care.

There is no danger of rewarding too well the person whose faithful diligence has, by the Divine blessing, made your son a scholar, a virtu-

\* Whoever is in doubt about the subjects of the foregoing queries, may read, for settling his judgment, the following authors, viz. *Hor.* Lib. i. Sat. x. upon the absurdity of making verses in a foreign language. Mr. *Locke's* Treat. of Educat. in various Places, particularly page 305. on the absurdity of putting youth upon making themes and verses. *Cowley* upon that of fatiguing them with a needless heap of grammar rules. To which add the authorities of *Tanaquil Faber*, Mr. *Clark*, *Milton*, *Carew*, the Governors of the Princes of the Royal blood of *France*, *Roger Ascham*, Esq; Latin preceptor to Queen *Elizabeth*, and others quoted at large by Mr. *Philips*, formerly preceptor to his Royal Highness the Duke of *Cumberland*, in his *Compendious Meth. of teaching languages*, printed 1750. And if these be not enough to condemn the laborious trifling commonly used in certain places of education, let Mr. *Walker*, *Addison*, *Pope*, and many other able men, who have writ on the subject, be consulted.

ous man, and a christian. That the gentlemen who employ, or rather wear themselves out, in the laborious work of the education of youth, do but too generally meet with narrow and ungrateful returns, is evident from this demonstration, that so few of them are seen to reap such fruits of their labours, as are sufficient to put them in easy, much less affluent circumstances, when old age comes upon them, while fiddlers, singers, players, and those who serve at best only to amuse, and often to debauch us, wallow in wealth and luxury. And yet, without reserve, and without disparagement, be it spoken, there is not a more valuable member of society, than a faithful and able instructor of youth.

Nor is it to be expected that the education of youth should succeed properly, if parents will thwart every measure taken by a prudent master for the advantage of a child, taking him home from time to time, interrupting the course of his studies, and pampering and fondling him in a manner incompatible with the oeconomy of a place of education, whereby a child must be led to conclude, that it is an unhappiness to be obliged to be at school; that it is doing him a kindness to fetch him home, to keep him in idleness, to feed him with rich food, and high sauces, and to allow him to drink wine, and to keep such hours for eating and sleeping as are unsuitable to his age. Did parents but consider, that a child's happiness depends not at all upon  
his

his being indulged and pampered; but upon having his mind easy, without hankering after what he does not know, and will never think of, if not put in his head by their improper management of him; and that the more he is humoured in his childish follies, the more wants, and, consequently, the more uneasinesses he will have; did parents, I say, consider this, they would not give themselves and their children the trouble they do, only to make both unhappy.

I have heard of a mother, who humoured her son to that pitch of folly, that, upon his taking it into his head, that it would be pretty to ride upon a cold surloin of beef, which was brought to table, she gravely ordered the servant to put a napkin upon it, and set him astride in the dish, that he might have his fancy. And of another, who begged her little daughter's nurse to take care, of all things, that the child should not see the moon, lest she should cry for it.

If parents will, in this manner, make it a point, never, even in the most necessary cases, to oppose the wayward wills of infants, what can they expect, but that peevishness and perverseness should grow upon them to a degree, that must make them unhappy on every occasion; when they meet with proper treatment from more reasonable people? The youth, who, at his father's table, has been used to eat of a variety of dishes every day, than which nothing is more pernicious to any constitution, old or young, will think

think himself miserable, when he comes to the simple and regulated diet of a boarding-school; though this last is much more conducive to health. He, who has been used to do whatever he pleased at home, will think it very grievous to be controuled, when he comes to a place of education. The consequence of which will be, that his complaints will be innumerable, as his imaginary grievances. Where the truth will not seem a sufficient foundation for complaining, lyes and inventions will be called in; for youth have very little principle. They will be listned to by the fond parent. The number of them will increase, upon their meeting encouragement. The education of the child, and his very morals, will in this manner be hurt, if not ruined. This is not theory; but experienced and notorious fact. The weakness of parents in this respect does, indeed, exceed belief. And unhappily, the best people are often most given to this weakness, having minds the most susceptible of tenderness and affection, and of the most easy credulity. This weakness appears in all shapes, and produces all kinds of bad effects. It is the cause of parents overlooking the most dangerous and fatal turns of mind in their children, till the season for correcting them be past; of indulging them in the very things they ought to be restrained in; of their hating those who endeavour to open their eyes to the faults of their children; of listning to their groundless complaints against their masters;

ters; of restraining and hampering them in the discharge of their duty to their children; and of ungratefully imputing to the master's want of care the failure of their children's improvement in what nature has denied them capacities for; at the same time, that they know other youths have made proper improvements under the same care: and cannot with any colour of reason suppose a prudent master so much his own enemy, as to neglect one pupil, and use diligence with another.

## S E C T. III.

*Process of Education from four Years of Age, to the finishing of the Puerile Studies and Exercises.*

FROM the age of four to six, a healthy child, of good capacity, may learn to read *English* distinctly, according to the spelling and points. The propriety of emphasis and cadence must not be expected at so early an age. Within this period likewise, he may be introduced into the rudiments of *Latin*, and may learn to decline by memory a set of examples of all the declinable parts of speech.

If I did not think some knowledge in the *Latin* language absolutely necessary to any person, whose station raises him above the rank of a working mechanic, I should not recommend it. Notwithstanding what has been said by many against the necessity of any knowledge of *Latin*, I must own, I cannot see that an *English* edu-

tion can be begun upon any other foundation. Without grammar, there can be no regular education. And the grammar of one language may as well be learned as of another, the science being in the main the same in all. It is very well known, that most of the *European* languages are more *Latin* than any thing else. And what more thorough method is there of letting a person into the spirit of a language, than by making him early acquainted with the original roots, from whence it is derived? As great part of the *Latin* arises from the *Greek*, some judicious persons have thought it best to begin with that language.

Upon the whole, one would think, no parent should wish his son brought up in so defective a manner, as to be at a stand at a *Latin* phrase in an *English* book, or a saying of an antient author mentioned in conversation, which must be very often met with by any man who reads at all, or keeps company above the very lowest ranks of life.

From the age of six to eight, his reading may be continued and improved, his principles of *Latin* reviewed from time to time, and he may be employed in reading such easy books as *Corderius*, and some of *Erasmus's* colloquies with an *English* translation.

About this age likewise, children may be taught to read a little *French*, a language which no gentleman, or man of business, can be without. After they have gone through *Boyer's* grammar,

mar, and learned by memory a sett of examples of verbs regular and irregular, and common phrases, they may read a little collection lately published, called, *Recueil des auteurs François*, printed at *Edinburgb*. *Les avantures de Gil Blas*, *Le diable boiteux*, *Les avantures de Telemaque*, *Les comedies de Moliere*, and *Les tragedies de Racine*, are proper books for youth to read for their improvement in *French*. They must likewise practise translating into *French*, and speaking the language.

From eight to twelve years of age, they may be employed in the same manner, and may besides be introduced to such *Latin* authors as *Justin*, *Cornelius Nepos* *Eutropius*, *Phædrus*, and the like, There is a pretty Collection lately published, entitled, *Selecta Latini Sermonis Exemplaria*, &c. very proper for the lower classes. *Ovid* is an author usually put into the hands of youth about this age. But for my part, I do not think any thing of his, besides his *Fasti*, at all fit for the young and unprincipled mind. His obscenities, and indecencies will, I hope, be readily given up. And the bulk of his other writings are either overstrained witticisms, bombastic rants, or improbable and monstrous fictions; none of which seem proper for laying a good foundation in the young mind for raising a superstructure of true taste; rational goodness; and a steady love of truth.

From twelve years of age to sixteen or eighteen, that is, to the finishing of the education, properly so called; for a wise man never finishes his enquiries and improvements, till life itself be



finished; in the beginning of this period, I say, besides carrying on and improving the above, a youth ought (and not much before, according to my judgment) to be entered into writing, and soon after into arithmetic, and then to read a little of the elements of geometry. Writing requires some degree of strength of muscle, and of sight; and numbers and the elements of geometry, some ripeness of judgment, which are not to be found in the generality of youth before twelve years of age.

The neglecting too long the first principles of geometry, and the knowledge of numbers, is found in experience to be very prejudicial; as a person, whose mind comes once to be full of various ideas, and eager after different pursuits, as those of most people are by sixteen or eighteen, can hardly by any means bring himself to apply to any new branch of knowledge, of which he has not had, in the young and tractable years of life, some principles. Mathematics, to one who has had no tincture of that sort of knowledge infused into his mind in youth, will be a mere *terra incognita*; and therefore too disagreeable and irksome to be ever pursued by him with any considerable success. The case is by experience found to be the same with respect to languages, and every other complex or extensive branch of knowledge; which gave occasion to the great Mr. *Locke* to observe, that “the taking a taste  
“ of every sort of knowledge is necessary to form  
“ the

“ the mind, and is the only way to give the understanding its due improvement to the full extent of its capacity.”

Proper books for learning the knowledge of numbers are *Fisher's*, *Wingate's*, *Hill's*, or *Wells's* arithmetic. For the elements of geometry some think *Pardie's* an easy introduction. But his demonstrations not being always unquestionable, I cannot recommend it. *Simpson's* geometry is a very elegant compend. But *Cunn's*, or *Simpson's Euclid* is the best book for a young beginner. Of the higher parts of mathematics I shall speak afterwards.

About the age of twelve it will be proper for a youth to enter on the Greek language. From the small *Westminster* Grammar (which is as good as any) he may go on to read the New-Testament, and from thence to sundry *Collections*, and *Isocrates*, or *Demosthenes*, *Plato*, and *Homer*.

I know no occasion a youth can have to be obliged to get any thing by memory in learned or foreign languages, except the declensions of a sett of examples, a few phrases, and rules of construction, which last may be learned in *English*. The memory may be to much greater advantage furnished with what may be of real use in life, than with crabbed grammar rules, or with heaps of *Latin* or *Greek* verse. As to making *Latin* or *Greek* themes or verses, I would as soon have a son of mine taught to dance on a rope. But of this enough.

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From the *Latin* authors above-mentioned a youth of parts, may, about fourteen and fifteen, and onwards, be advanced to *Virgil*, *Sallust*, *Terence*, *Livy*, *Tully*, with select parts of *Horace* (for many parts of that author ought not to be in print), and so on to *Tacitus*, *Juvenal*, and *Perfius*.

One of the best school-books extant is a small collection lately published, printed for *L. Hawes*, in *Pater-noster-row*, which I could wish enlarged to the extent of a volume or two more, collected with equal judgment. It is intituled, *Selectæ ex profanis scriptoribus historiæ*. This may be read by youth from ten years of age and upwards; and would be very proper to make translations from, for improving them at once in orthography, in writing, in style, and sentiment. If they were to speak such versions, corrected by the master, by way of orations, before their parents, I should think the end of improving their elocution, and giving them courage to speak in public, might be thereby much better attained, than by their being taught either to act plays in a dead language, or to rant in a theatrical manner *English* tragedies. To speak a grave speech with proper grace and dignity may be of use in real life. The rant of the stage can never be used off the stage. And practising it in youth has often produced very bad effects.

I know no necessity for a youth's going thro' every classic author he reads. There are parts in all books less entertaining than others. And perhaps it might have a good effect to leave off  
sometimes

sometimes where the pupil shews a desire to go on, rather than fully satiate his curiosity.

When youth come to read *Horace*, *Livy*, and such authors, they may be supposed capable of entering a little into the critical beauties of the antients, and of writing in general. It will be of great consequence, that they be early put in a right way of thinking with respect to the real merit of the antients, their excellencies, which may properly be imitated, their faults to be avoided, and deficiencies to be supplied. Of which more fully afterwards.

*Pope's* Essay on criticism may with success be commented upon. From which, as it takes in the principal rules laid down and observations made by the writers before him, as well as his own, may be drawn a general view of the requisites for a well-written piece. The principles of this knowledge, early planted in the mind, would be of great use in leading people to form their taste by some clear and certain rules drawn from nature and reason, which might prevent their praising and blaming in the wrong place; their mistaking noisy bombast for the true sublime; a style holding forth more than is expressed, for the dull and unanimated; bigness, for greatness; whining for the pathetic; bullying for the heroic; oddity for terror; the barbarous for the tragical; farce for comedy; quaint conceit, pert scurrility, or affected cant, for true wit; and so forth. The beauty and advantage

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of method ; the force of expression suited to the thought ; the causes of perspicuity or confusion, in a writer ; the peculiar delicacy in the turn of a phrase ; the importance, or insignificancy, of a thought ; the aptness of a simile ; the music of cadence in prose, and measure in verse ; the liveliness of description ; the brightness of imagery ; the distinction of characters ; the pomp of machinery ; the greatness of invention ; the correctness of judgment ; and I know not how many more particulars, might with success be enlarged upon in teaching youth about fifteen years of age, and upwards.

When a youth has acquired a readiness at writing and numbers, he may learn the beautiful and useful art of book-keeping according to the *Italian* method. Though this piece of knowledge is more immediately useful for traders, it ought not to be neglected by any person whatever. Many an estate might have been saved, had the owner of it known how to keep correct accounts of his income and expences. Were there only the beauty and elegance of this art to recommend it, no wise parent would let his son be without what may be so easily acquired. The best system of book-keeping, and the briefest, is *Webster's*.

About fourteen or fifteen years of age a youth of parts may be instructed in the use of the globes, which will require his having the terms in geography, and many of those used in astronomy, explained

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explained to him. To this may be joined an abridgment of the antient and present state of nations, commonly called antient and modern geography. The best books on the use of the globes are *Harris's* and *Randal's* Geography, or *Gordon's* Geographical grammar; which, with *Hubner's* Compend, and *Wells's Geographia classica*, will be sufficient to introduce the pupil to a general notion of antient and modern geography. A set of maps ought to be turned to, and the pupil taught to understand the manner of constructing and using them.

The knowledge of the surface of our globe, and the present state of nations, is necessary and useful for men of all ranks, orders, and professions. The statesman can have no distinct ideas of the interests and connexions of foreign nations; the divine no clear conception of Scripture or ecclesiastical history, nor the merchant of the voyages his ships are to make, the seats of commerce, and means of collecting its various articles; nor indeed the private gentleman bear a part in common conversation, without understanding the situations, distances, extent, and general state of kingdoms and empires. In a word, he, who does not know geography, does not know the world. And it is miserable, that a gentleman should know nothing of the world he lives in, but the spot, in which he was born.

Algebra is a science of admirable use in solving questions seemingly inexplicable. I would advise  
that

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that every youth of fortune and parts have a tincture of it about this period of life. *Hammond's*, *Simpson's*, and *Maclaurin's* treatises are proper to be made use of in teaching it.

About the same age, youth may be let into a general knowledge of chronology, or of the principal æras and periods of the world, and of the outlines of universal history. This cannot be better done, than by reading them lectures upon the Chart of universal history, lately published, shewing them, at the same time, upon the terrestrial globe, and in maps, the situation and extent of kingdoms and empires. The chronological tables in the twenty-first volume of the Universal history may be consulted by those who would descend to more minute particulars in teaching youth the knowledge of chronology.

About the age of sixteen or eighteen, a youth of good parts may learn just so much of logic as may be useful for leading him to an accurate and correct manner of thinking, and judging of such truths as are not capable of mathematical demonstration. The *Aristotelian* method of reasoning in mood and figure might be proper, if the ideas we affix to all words were as precise as those of a right line, a surface, or a cube. But so long as we neither have in our own minds at all times, nor much less can communicate to those we converse with, the same invariable ideas to the same words, we must be content, if we mean either to receive or communicate knowledge, to recede

recede a little from the rigid rules of logic, laid down by the *Burgesdykes* and the *Scheiblers*, which always hamper, and often mislead the understanding.

For the purpose of putting young persons in the way of reasoning justly, Dr *Watts's* Logic may with success be read and commented on to them, and some of the easiest and most fundamental parts of Mr. *Locke's* Essay on human understanding. After which some parts of the writings of some of the closest reasoners in morals may be examined, and the force of their arguments shewn, to lead the pupil to the imitation of their manner. Such writers as Dr. *Clarke*, *Woollaston*, and bishop *Butler*, author of the *Analogy*, will be proper for this purpose. It may also be useful to shew how subtle men imperceptibly deviate from sound reason, and lead their readers into fallacies. The works of *Hobbes*, *Morgan*, and *Hebrew Hutchinson*, may, among innumerable others, be proper examples to shew, that the semblance of reason may be, where there is no substance.

It would be of great advantage to youth, if they could, as a part of their education, have an opportunity of seeing a course of experiments, at first exhibited by *Desaguliers*, *Whiston*, and others. They would there learn, in the most entertaining and easy manner, the grounds, as far as known, of the noble science of physiology. And in seeing a regular series of experiments,



ments, and observations, in mechanics, hydrostatics, pneumatics, optics, astronomy, chemistry, and the like, would have their curiosity raised to the highest pitch, and would acquire a taste for knowledge, which might not only lead them, in after-life, to pursue their own improvement in the most valuable ways, but likewise might, by furnishing an inexhaustible fund of entertainment, supply the continual want of taverns, plays, music, or other less innocent amusements, to fill up their vacant hours. For it is only the want of something within themselves, to entertain them, that drives people to routs, rackets, or masquerades, to the fatal waste of time and money, and the utter perversion of the true taste of life.

A person, who understands this kind of knowledge, with the help of a very few instruments, as a telescope, a microscope, an air-pump, and a pair of Mr. *Neal's* patent globes, may go through the grounds of this sort of knowledge, following the method given by Mr. *Martin* in his Philosophical grammar (guarding against his errors) to the great entertainment and improvement of a set of pupils.

Dancing, fencing, riding, music, drawing, and other elegant arts, and manly exercises, may, according to the circumstances of parents, and genius of children, be carried greater or shorter lengths. For, a person, whose education has fitted him for being a useful member of society, according to his station, and for happiness in a  
future

future state, may be said to have been well brought up, though he should not excel in these elegancies. And it is not such frivolous accomplishments as these, that will make a man valuable, who has not a mind endowed with wisdom and virtue. Above all things, to make the mere ornaments of life, the employment of life, is to the last degree preposterous.

It is evidently of advantage, that a young gentleman be, from his infancy almost, put into the way of wielding his limbs decently, and coming into a room like a human creature. But I really think it more eligible, that a youth be a little bashful, and awkward, than that he have too much of the player or dancing-master. Care ought therefore to be taken, that he do not learn to dance too well. The consequence will probably be, that, being commended for it, he will take all opportunities of exhibiting his performance, and will in time become a hunter after balls, and a mere dangler among the ladies.

The same caution ought to be used with respect to music. It is true, there are very few of the good people of *England*, who have so much true taste, as to be capable of excelling in that alluring and bewitching art. But there are instances of the bad effects of cultivating it too much.

So much of the riding-school, as is useful and necessary, there is nothing to be said against. But it is deplorable to see many of our gentry  
study

study the liberal science of jockeyship to the neglect of all the rest.

Fencing, if practised to such a degree as to excel at it, is the likeliest means that can be contrived for getting a man into quarrels. And I see not, that the running a fellow-creature through the body, or having that operation performed upon's self, is much the more desirable for its being done *secundum artem*. Yet whoever wears a sword, ought to know somewhat of the art of handling it.

Drawing is an ingenious accomplishment, and does not lead directly to any vice that I know of. It may even be put upon the same foot with a taste for reading, as a sober amusement, which may lead a young gentleman to love home and regular hours. But it is far from being friendly to the constitution. Like all sedentary employments which engage the attention, it is prejudicial to the health, especially where oyl-colours are used, which is not indeed a necessary part in drawing. It likewise fixes and strains the eyes, and, in small work, fatigues them too much to be pursued to any great length with safety. At the same time, to know perspective, and the other principles of the art, and to have such a command of the pencil, as to be capable of striking out a draught of an object, or view, not so much with delicacy, as with strength, swiftness, and fluency, is an accomplishment very ornamental, and often useful.

I will conclude this section with the following remark, That there is this difference between the conduct of education, and the improvement of the mind afterwards, that in education, the view being to open the mind to all kinds of knowledge, there is no absurdity in carrying on several studies together, nor in passing from one to another, before the pupil arrives at great perfection in the first; on the contrary, in maturity, the view being not to learn first principles (which are supposed to have been studied in youth) but to acquire a perfect knowledge of subjects, it is then improper to pursue many different studies at once, or to give over one, and proceed to another, till one has carried the former a competent length.

## S E C T. IV.

*Of manly Studies. Of a Method of acquiring a competent Knowledge of the Sciences. Of proper Books, and Apparatus.*

**B**EFORE a young gentleman sets about any particular study, supposing his puerile education finished, he may prepare himself for more manly improvements by a careful perusal of the following books, which will give him a general view or map of science, viz. The Preface to *Chambers's Dictionary*. *Clark's Method of study*. *Boswel's Method of study*. *Locke's Conduct of human understanding*. *Watts's Improvement*

ment of the mind. *Baker's* Reflections on learning (an ingenious work, except upon the subjects of astronomy and philosophy, where the author has bewildered himself miserably.) *Wootton's* Reflections on antient and modern learning. *Rollin's* Belles Lettres.

Nothing will be of more consequence towards the success of a young gentleman's endeavours for his own improvement, than his getting early into a right track of reading and study. For by that means he will save infinite trouble, which many go through by beginning at the wrong end ; who, after distressing themselves in pursuing what they have not the necessary accomplishments for, find themselves obliged to give up what they had undertaken, and go back to first principles. Men thus suffer great loss of time and labour ; meet with discouragement in their studies ; and the structure of learning which they raise, proves in the end but a piece of patch-work. Others, by being at first put upon a wrong course of reading, find themselves plunged into mystery, fanaticism, or error of one kind or other ; out of which it costs them many years to extricate themselves. Others, attaching themselves too early and too closely to one narrow track, as pure mathematics, or poetry, cramp their minds in their youth ; or, by giving too great a loose to fancy, unfit them for expatiating boldly, and at the same time surely, in the fields of knowledge. To avoid these radical errors, let  
a young

a young gentleman carefully study the books above recommended, and through the whole course of his reading, take all opportunities of conversing with, and consulting, men of judgment in books; of a large and free way of thinking; and of extensive learning. The consequence of which judicious manner of proceeding has, in many instances, been improvement in most branches of science to a masterly degree by thirty or forty years of age. But this supposes a superior natural capacity, and various other advantages.

Next after such a knowledge of languages, numbers, geometry, geography, chronology, and logic, which may be called instrumental studies, after such a moderate acquaintance with these, as may be acquired before eighteen or twenty, youth may proceed to the more manly studies of history, biography, the theory of government, law, commerce, oeconomies, and ethics.

I mention these together, because there is a connexion between them, which renders them proper to be carried on in succession, as they will mutually assist and throw a light on each other. And I advise a studious youth to improve himself in such branches of knowledge as these, before he proceeds to perfect himself in the higher mathematics; first, on account of the incomparably superior importance of a thorough knowledge of our own nature, state, and obligations, the indispensable necessity of understanding which

subjects is such, as to make all other pursuits appear comparatively but specious trifling. And secondly, because this kind of knowledge is obviously of such a nature, as not to hazard any possible bad effect upon a young mind, which is more than can be said of most other branches of study, indulged to a great length. The vanity and affectation, which a little unusual knowledge in classical learning gives weak minds, is so conspicuous as to have occasioned that species of learning to be termed, by way of distinction, pedantic scholarship. And as to mathematics, many instances could be produced of men of very fine heads for that science, who, by accustoming themselves wholly to demonstration, have run into an affected habit of requiring demonstration in subjects naturally incapable of it, and of despising all those parts of study, as unscientific, which do not give the satisfaction of mathematical certainty. Such persons thus disqualifying themselves for improvement in the most useful parts of knowledge, though eminent in one particular way, may, upon the whole, be properly said to be men of narrow minds. This evil might have been prevented, had they timely given themselves to other inquiries, as well as mathematics, and been accustomed to apply their minds to various ways of searching into, and finding out truth. But the natural, and almost unavoidable effect of confining the mind to one kind

kind of pursuit, is the hampering and narrowing, instead of enlarging and ennobling it.

At the same time, it ought to be remembered, that nothing tends so much to habituate to a justness of thought, and accuracy of expression, as a tincture of mathematical knowledge received in youth. All that is here intended to be guarded against, is the plunging too deep at first into that study; which often tends to the exclusion of all others for life. And, as was before observed, no part of useful or ornamental knowledge is to be excluded, consistently with the view of a complete improvement of the mind.

Useful books, previous to the reading of history, are such as the following, viz. *Rollin's* Method of studying history, in his *Belles lettres*. *Bossuet's* Discours de l'histoire universelle. *Potter's* *Greek*, and *Kenner's* *Roman* antiquities, *Strauchius's* and *Helvicus's* Chronology, *Sleidan* On the four monarchies; *Wheat's* and *Fresnoy's* Methods of studying history.

In order to read history with perfect clearness, geography must go hand in hand. The system of geography lately published, together with *Anson's* voyage, which contains some new accounts, not in that work, *Wells's* *Geographia classica*, and *Senex's* New general *Atlas*, may be proper to perfect a gentleman in that useful branch of knowledge.

To be master of antient history, let a person first peruse carefully the Universal history, consulting



sulting all along the maps of the several countries which have been the scene of action, and referring every character and event to its proper date. After this general view of the whole body of antient history, those who have leisure and other advantages, may read as many of the originals as they please, especially upon more important characters and facts. They are all along quoted by the compilers of the above excellent and useful work. Those who possess the learned languages, in which those originals were writ, find in the perusal of them a peculiar pleasure, even where the facts related are already known. There is a purity and beautiful simplicity in the descriptions the antients give, which discerning readers do not find in the works of translators, or compilers. Besides that the very circumstance of the mind's letting itself be deceived into the belief, that we read the very words of an antient warrior, or orator, though it is certain, those we have ascribed to them by historians, are for the most part put into their mouths by the historians themselves; the mind's persuading itself, that it hears the very words and accents of an illustrious character in antiquity, makes the perusal of an original peculiarly entertaining and striking.

Gentlemen of leisure and fortune, especially, ought by no means to be without a little acquaintance with *Herodotus*, *Thucydides*, *Polybius*, *Xenophon*, *Diodorus Siculus*, and *Plutarch*, the most celebrated

celebrated Greek historians; nor with *Justin*, *Livy*, *Tacitus*, *Cæsar*, *Sallust*, *Suetonius* and *Curtius*, the greatest among the *Romans*.

Some of the best modern histories, are *Puffendorff's* Introduction, *Rapin's* History of England, *Mezeray's* and *Daniel's* of France, *Mariana's* of Spain, *Vertot's* of Portugal, *Sir Paul Ricaut's* of the Turks, *Oakley's* of the Saracens, *Du Halde's* of China; — of the pyratival states of *Barbary*; *Herrera's* of America; History of the conquest of *Mexico*; of *Germany*; of *Naples*; of *Florence* by *Machiavel*; of *Venice* by *Nain* and *Paruta*; of *Genoa*; of *Poland* by *Connor*; of *Holland*; of *Flanders* by *Bentivoglio*.

To read history with advantage, keep constantly in view the following ends; to find out truth; to unravel, if possible, the grounds of events, and the motives of actions; to attain clear ideas of remarkable characters, especially of that which distinguishes one character from another; to profit by the various useful lessons exhibited; to study human nature, as represented in history, and to endeavour to find out which characters you yourself resemble the most; and to remark whatever throws any light or evidence upon religion.

To draw up in writing an epitome or abstract of the most shining parts of history and eminent characters, as one proceeds, adjusting the chronology and geography all along, will contribute greatly to the fixing in the mind a general

comprehensive view of the whole thread of story from the oldest accounts of time downward, disposed according to the several ages and countries which make a figure in history. But this will require leisure to execute it properly. Among the abridged facts, might with great advantage be disposed a set of reflections moral, political, and theological, as they occurred in the course of reading, which would in the whole amount to a very great number and variety; and would prove an agreeable and improving amusement in advanced life, to peruse, add to, and correct, according as one's judgment matured, and views enlarged. A man of leisure and abilities might, in his collection of historical remarks, unite together in one view whatever characters seemed to have any resemblance, might set against one another such as, by making striking contrasts, might set off one another to the best advantage. He might observe the different conduct of the same person at different times, and account, from the different circumstances he was engaged in, for those differences in his behaviour. He might observe how one, of perhaps the best abilities, was unhappily led into such a course of conduct as has blasted his reputation; how another, by missing certain advantages, fell short of the character, which, by a happy co-incidence of circumstances, he must have attained. How seemingly inconsiderable particulars in the conduct of princes and great men, have produced strange

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effects in the affairs of mankind, and what momentous consequences, to the rest of the world, depend upon the behaviour of those who are at the head of it.

History is the key to the knowledge of human nature. For in it we see what sort of beings our fellow-creatures are, by reading their genuine characters in their actions. These a person, who carefully studies history, may trace up to their source, and pursue and unravel all the wonderful disguises, doublings, and intricacies of the human heart. Life, as it is generally conducted by persons of all stations, but especially of the highest, appears from history in its true colours, as a scene of craft, of violence, of selfishness, cruelty, folly, and vanity. History shews the real worth of the usual objects of the pursuit of mankind; that there is nothing new under the sun; nothing to be wondered at; that mankind have been from the beginning bewildered and led from their real happiness, and the end of their being, after a thousand visionary vanities, which have deluded and disappointed them from generation to generation, and are likely to do so to the last.

What can be more entertaining or instructive, than in history to trace this world of ours thro' its various states, observe what sort of inhabitants have possessed it, in different periods; how different, and yet how much the same; how nations, states, and kingdoms have risen, flourished, and

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funks; the first rise of government, patriarchal, monarchical, republican; what characters have appeared in different ages, eminent for virtue, or infamous for wickedness; to what seemingly slight causes the most important events have been owing; the arts, by which one man has been able to subdue millions of his fellow-creatures, and to tread on the neck of mankind; the motives, which have put men upon action; and the weaknesses, which have been the cause of the baffling of their schemes; the force of human passions, the weakness of reason, the influence which prejudices and attachments have on the conduct of men, the surprizing heights, to which virtue has raised some men, the difficulties conquered, the honours gained, and the lasting fame acquired, by a disinterested love of their country; the madness, on which ambition, covetousness, and love of pleasure have driven men; and through the whole, the influence of the unseen hand of Providence, disappointing the counsels of the wise; weakening the power of the mighty; putting down one, and raising another up; and working out its own great and important ends, by the weakness, the power, the virtue, the wickedness, the wisdom, and the folly of mankind.

History is the great instructor for all ranks in life, but especially the highest. For those, who are besieged and blocked up by triple guards of flatterers, whose chief care and great interest it

is above all things to prevent the approach of truth, in history may see characters as great or greater than their own, treated with the utmost plainness. There the haughty tyrant may see how a *Nero* was spoke of behind his back, though deified by the slavish knee of flattery. Thence he may judge how he himself will be spoken of, by historians; who will no longer dread his menace, after his head is laid in the dust. Thence he may judge how his character is perhaps now treated in the antichamber of his own palace, by the very sycophants, whose servile tongues had, the moment before, been lavishing the fulsome and undistinguished applause on his worst vices, which they had sanctified with the title of princely virtues. History will faithfully lay before him his various and important duty (for the higher the rank, the more extensive the sphere of duty to be performed), which those, who come into his presence, dare not, or oftner will not, instruct him in. There he will see the original of the institution of government; and learn, that power is given into the hands of one, for the advantage of the many; not, according to the monstrous doctrine of tyranny and slavery, the many made for one. There he will learn every honest art of government, and can be engaged in no difficult circumstance, of which he will not find an example, and upon which he may not learn some useful instruction for governing mankind. For the human species have been  
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from the beginning very much the same, and generally capable, by wise laws strictly executed, by a judicious police universally prevailing, and by the powerful example of persons in high rank, of being governed and managed at the pleasure of able and politic princes. There he will see the difference between the real glory of a *Titus* or an *Alfred*, and the horrible barbarity of a *Philip* or a *Lewis*. He may set his own character and actions at the distance of a few centuries, and judge in his own mind, whether he will then appear in the light of a devourer of his fellow-creatures, or of the father of his people; of a wise and active monarch, or of a thing of shreds and patches; of an example to mankind of every sublime virtue, or a general corruptor of manners. History is the grand tribunal, before which princes themselves are, in the view of all mankind, arraigned, tried, and, often with the greatest freedom as well as impartiality, condemned to everlasting infamy. And though it is the mark of a truly great mind to dare to be virtuous at the expence of reputation; it is a proof of a soul sunk to the lowest baseness of human nature, to bear to think of deserving the contempt or hatred of all mankind, the wise and good, as well as the unthinking and worthless.

There is not indeed a lesson in the whole compass of morals, that is not, in the most advantageous and pleasing way, to be learned in history and biography, taking in antient and modern,

dern, sacred and profane. There the madness of ambition appears in a striking light. The dreadful ravages produced by that wide-wasting fury, whenever she has possessed the frantic brain of a hero, and sent him, like a devouring fire, or an overflowing inundation, spreading destruction over the face of the earth; the numbers of the innocent and helpless, who have, in the different ages of the world, been spoiled, and massacred, to make one fellow-worm great; the human hecatombs, which have been offered to this infernal demon; the anxious hours of life, and the violent deaths, to which unthinking men have brought themselves, by the egregious folly of flying from happiness in pursuit of the phantom of a name; the extensive and endlessly-various views, which history exhibits, of the fatal consequences of this vice, ought to teach the most inconsiderate the wisdom of contentment, and the happiness of retirement.

In history we see the most illustrious characters, for that worth, which alone is real, the internal excellence of the mind, rising superior to the mean pursuit of riches, dignifying and sanctifying poverty by voluntarily embracing it. From thence we cannot help learning this important lesson, That the external advantages of wealth, titles, buildings, dress, equipage, and the like, are no more to the man, than the proud trappings to the horse, which add not to his value, and which we even remove, before we can examine



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mine his soundness; and which may be put upon the stupid ass, as well as the generous steed.

The contrasts we find in history between those nations and particular persons, who studied temperance and abstinence, and those whose beastly luxury renders them infamous to posterity, ought in all reason to convince the readers of history of the advantage of living agreeably to the dignity of human nature. The spontaneous and voluntary approbation, which the heart immediately gives to virtue, where passion and prejudice are out of the way (as is the case where we consider the character of those, who have been buried a thousand years ago), seems to be the voice of God, within the mind, calling it to the study and practice of whatever is truly laudable. Why does not every prince judge of himself with the same impartiality as he does of the *Cæsars*? Why does a private person indulge himself in vices, which all mankind, and even himself, abhor in a *Sardanapalus*, or *Heliogabalus*?

It would be easy to write a book, as large as this whole work, upon the moral advantages of the study of history. But to proceed;

The writers of ecclesiastical history may be as properly mentioned here, as any where else, *viz.* *Eusebius*, *Socrates*, &c. *Cave's* Lives of the fathers, *Dupin's* Ecclesiastical history, Histories of the councils, *Bower's* History of the popes, *Candler's* of the Inquisition, *Sleidan's* History of the reformation in *Germany*, *Brandt's* in the *Low-countries*,

*countries, Ruchat's in Switzerland, and Burnet's in England. To which add, Whiston's Sacred history, Fortin's Remarks on ecclesiastical history, and Mosheim's lately-published work.*

Biography is a species of history, with this peculiarity, that it exhibits more minutely the characters, and sets forth to view some, which are too private for history, but which are not on that account less worthy of being known, but perhaps more so, than those which, being more exposed, were more disguised and affected, and consequently more remote from nature, the knowledge of which ought to be the object in view. There is no sort of reading more profitable than that of the lives and characters of wise and good men. To find that great lengths have been actually gone in learning and virtue, that high degrees of perfection have been actually attained by men like ourselves, intangled among the infirmities, the temptations, the opposition from wicked men, and the other various evils of life; how does this shew us to ourselves as utterly inexcusable, if we do not endeavour to emulate the heights, we know have been reached by others of our fellow-creatures. Biography, in short, brings us to the most intimate acquaintance with the real characters of the illustrious dead; shews us what they have been, and consequently what we ourselves may be; sets before us the whole character of a person who has made himself eminent either by his virtues or vices; shews

shews us how he came first to take a right or wrong turn ; how he afterwards proceeded greater and greater lengths ; the prospects which invited him to aspire to higher degrees of glory, or the delusions which misled him from his virtue and his peace ; the circumstances which raised him to true greatness, or the rocks, on which he split, and sunk to infamy. And how can we more effectually, or in a more entertaining manner, learn the important lesson, What we ought to pursue, and what to avoid ?

Besides *Plutarch*, *Cornelius Nepos*, *Suetonius*, and the rest of the antient biographers, the moderns are to be consulted. The General dictionary, continued by the writers of *Biographia Britannica*, is a vast treasure of this kind of knowledge. One cannot propose to peruse thoroughly such voluminous works. They are only to have a place in a gentleman's library, and to be turned to at times, and select parts to be read and digested.

A general insight into the theoretical part of government, and law, seems necessary to the complete improvement of the mind. This may be best acquired by a careful attention to history, which shews the original of government ; its necessity and advantage to the world, when properly administered ; its corruptions and errors ; changes and revolutions ; ruin and subversion, and their causes. This is the proper science of a gentleman

man of eminent rank, who has weight and influence in his country.

Proper helps for this study are the following, viz.

*Bacon*, *Locke*, and *Sidney*, on Government; *Harrington's* and *Sir Thomas More's Works*; *Grotius* on the Rights of war and peace; *Puffendorff's* Law of nature and nations, with *Barbeyrac's* notes; *Milton's* Political works, which are to be read with large allowances, for his zeal for the party he was engaged in; *Sir William Temple's Works*; *Castiglione's* Courtier; *Rymer's Fœdera*; *Wood's* Institutes; *L'esprit des loix*; *Domat's* Civil law, and the Statutes abridg'd.

The theory of commerce is closely connected with the foregoing. It is a subject highly worthy the attention of any person, who would improve himself with a general and extensively-useful knowledge; and for persons in eminent and active stations is indispensably necessary. Those who have any concern with the legislature, and those who are at the head of cities and corporations, if they be deficient in knowledge of the interests of trade, are wanting in what is their proper calling. Every person, who has either vote or interest in choosing a representative in parliament, ought to make it his business to know so much of the commerce of his country, as to know how, and by whom, it is likely to be promoted or discouraged. And if all was rightly regulated, it is to be questioned if any one ought

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to be an elector, who could not make a tolerable figure in the house, if not as a speaker, at least as a voter.

To acquire some general understanding of the theory of trade and commerce, a gentleman may, with advantage, use the following books, *viz.* *Postlethwaite's* Dictionary of trade and commerce; *The British merchant*, 3 vols. in 12mo; Sir *Josiah Child* on Trade; *Urtariz's* Theory of trade and commerce; *Universal library* of trade and commerce; *The Merchant's map* of commerce; *Locke* on trade and coin; *Lex mercatoria rediviva*; *Oldenburgh's*, *Stevens's*, and *Lockyer's* Pieces on trade and exchange; *Davenant* on trade and revenues; *Gee* on trade; Tracts by Mr. *Tucker* of *Bristol*, and *Anderson's* History of Commerce.

But whoever, from a view to public good, would perfectly understand the present state of the commerce of these kingdoms, as it is continually varying and fluctuating, he cannot expect to have a just account of it by any other means than the informations of those actually engaged in it.

A gentleman may afterwards read the works of those writers who have treated of the human nature and faculties, their extent and improvement, in a speculative or theoretical way. After having studied history, he will be qualified to judge whether such authors treat the subject properly or not; and will be capable of improving

and correcting their theory from the examples of real characters exhibited in history.

Mr. *Locke's* Essay on human understanding is the foundation of this sort of knowledge. There is no good author on the subject, who has not gone upon his general plan. His Conduct of the understanding is also a work worthy of its author. The great bishop *Butler*, author of the *Analogy*, in some of his Sermons, which might be more properly called philosophical discourses, has with much sagacity corrected several errors of the writers on this subject, on the theory of the passions, and other particulars. The works of Mr. *Hutcheson* of *Glasgow* may be perused with advantage. He is both, on most points, a good reasoner, and an elegant writer. Besides these authors, and others, who have written expressly on this subject, many of whom have said good things; but have run into some disputable peculiarities of opinion, on account of which I do not choose to recommend them; besides these, I say, the writings of almost all our celebrated *English* divines and moralists contain valuable materials on this subject.

The inimitable authors of the *Spectator*, *Tatler*, and *Guardian*, have displayed the whole of human life in all the shapes and colours it appears in. Those admirable essays may be read as a ground-work of oeconomics, or the knowledge of the arts of life.

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There would be no end of giving a list of books on this head. The few following are some of the best, *viz.* The rule of life in select sentences, from the antients; Apophthegms of the antients; *Mason's* Self-knowledge; *Charron* on Wisdom; *Bacon's*, *Collier's*, and *Montaigne's* Essays; *Fuller's* Introductions to wisdom and prudence; The Moral Miscellany; The Practical Preacher; and The Plain Dealer in two vol.

Of all parts of knowledge, which may be properly termed scientific, there is none, that can be so ill dispensed with by a gentleman, who would cultivate his mind to the utmost perfection, as that of Ethics, or the grounds of morality. The knowledge of right and wrong, the obligations and consequences of virtue, and the ruinous nature and tendency of vice, ought to be perceived by every well-cultivated mind in the most clear and perfect manner possible. But of this most important branch of science, and what is very closely connected with it, *viz.* revealed religion, I shall treat in the two following books.

The best antient moralists are *Plato*, *Aristotle*, *Epictetus*, *Hierocles*, *Xenophon*, *Æsop*, *Plutarch*, *Cicero*, *Seneca* *Antoninus*. Among the moderns, besides those mentioned under other heads, and besides our best divines, as *Barrow*, *Tillotson*, and the rest, the following are excellent moral treatises, *viz.* *Woolaston's* Religion of nature delineated; *Groves's* System of morality; *Balguy's* Tracts; *Cudworth's* Immutable and eternal morality; *Cumberland de legibus*. Add to these, *Glover's*, *Campbel's*, and

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*Nettleton's* pieces on virtue and happiness; *Wilkins* on natural religion; *Fiddes* on morality; Minute philosopher; and *Paschal's* Thoughts. But no writer, antient or modern, ont his subject, exceeds, in closeness of reasoning, *Price's* Review of Morals, lately published.

Of all studies, none have a more direct tendency to aggrandize the mind, and consequently, none are more suitable to the dignity of human nature, than those, which are included under the general term of physiology, or the knowledge of nature, as astronomy, anatomy, botany, mineralogy, and so on. The study of nature appears in no light so truly noble, and fit to ennoble the human mind, as when compared with those of the works of men, as criticism, antiquities, architecture, heraldry, and the like. In the former, all is great, beautiful, and perfect. In the latter, the subjects are all comparatively mean and defective. And whatever is otherwise, owes its excellence to nature, as in poetry, painting, sculpture, and so forth. The first leads us to know and adore the greatest and most perfect of beings. The last, to see and regret our own weakness and imperfection.

The system of nature is the magnificent palace of the King of the universe. The ignorant and incurious, to use the comparison of a great philosopher, is as a spider, which retires into some dark corner, and wraps itself in its own dusty cobweb, insensible of the innumerable beauties



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which surround it. The judicious enquirer into nature, in contemplating, admiring, and moralising upon the works of its infinite Author, proves the justness of his own understanding, by his approbation of the perfect productions of an infinitely-perfect Being.

The sneers of superficial men, upon the weakness which has appeared in the conduct of some enquirers into nature, ought to have no influence to discourage us from those researches. If some few have spent too much time in the study of insects, to the neglect of the nobler parts of the creation, their error ought to suggest to us not a total neglect of those inferior parts of nature; but only to avoid the mistake of giving ourselves wholly to them. There is no species, which infinite Wisdom has thought worth making, and preserving for ages, whose nature is not highly worthy of our enquiring into. And it is certain, that there is more of curious workmanship in the structure of the body of the meanest reptile, than in the most complicated, and most delicate machine, that ever was or will be constructed by human hands.

To gain the great advantage which ought to be kept in view in enquiring into nature, to wit, improvement of the mind, we must take care to avoid the error of some, who seem to have no scheme but the finding out a set of mere dry facts, or truths, without ever thinking of the instruction which may be drawn from the observations

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tions made. An enquirer into nature (says the above eminent author, who himself went as great lengths as any one ever did in that study) who carries his researches no farther than the mere finding out of truths, acts a part as much beneath him, who uses philosophy to lead him to the knowledge of the Author of nature, as a child, who amuses himself with the external ornaments of a telescope, is inferior to the astronomer, who applies it to discover the wonders of the heavens.

The truth is, a man may be a great astronomer and physiologist, and yet by no means a truly great man. For mere speculative knowledge alone will not make a great mind; though, joined with the other necessary endowments, it gives the proper idea of an accomplished character. Sir *Isaac Newton*, Mr. *Boyle*, and those who, like them, look through nature up to nature's God, can alone be said to have pursued and attained the proper end of philosophy, which can be no other way of any real service to moral agents, than in so far as it has proper moral effects upon them.

It is strange that any man can think of the several wonders of nature, as the two extremes of stupendous greatness and inconceivable minuteness, the immense variety and wonderful uniformity, the frightful rapidity, and yet unvarying accuracy, of motions; the countless numbers, and yet ample provision, the simplicity of causes, and variety of effects, and the rest, and not be ir-

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refistibly led to think of the Maker and Governor of such a glorious work. How can men think of a globe twenty-five thousand miles round, as the earth we inhabit is known to be, without thinking of the hand which formed this mighty mass, and gave it a figure so regular, as we see it has by its shadow cast upon the moon in a lunar eclipse, without adoring Him, who could as it were, roll the stupendous heap between his hands, and accurately mould it into shape. But if astronomers are right, in calculating the magnitude of some of the other planets to exceed many hundred times this on which we live, and the sun himself to be equal to a million of earths, whose figure we observe to be perfectly regular; what can we think of the eye which could take in, and the hand which could form into regular shape, such cumbrous masses? If we consider this unwieldy lump of matter on which we live, as whirling round the sun in a course of between four and five hundred millions of miles in a year, and consequently, sixty thousand in one hour, a rapidity exceeding that of a cannon-ball just discharged, as much as that does the speed of a horse; can we avoid reflecting on the inconceivable might of the arm which brandished it, and threw it with a force proportioned to such a rapidity? One would think those who best understand the laws of motion, and the exactness necessary in adjusting the twofold forces which produce a circular or elliptical revolution round a centre, should be  
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the properest persons to set forth the wonders of Divine Wisdom, which has exhibited such instances of skill in the motions of our earth, and other planets round the sun, and in the compounded motions of satellites or moons round them.

Who can survey the countless myriads of animalcules, which with the help of the microscope are visible in almost all kinds of fluids, when in a state tending to putrefaction, without thinking on the Almighty Author of such a profusion of life? When some grains of sand, some small cuttings of human hairs, or any other body, whose real size is known, are put into a drop of one of those fluids which exhibit animalcules, it appears evident to any eye, that a grain of sand must be equal to the size of some millions of them. For the grain of sand appears a body of a great many inches solid, while the whole fluid seems filled with living creatures, even then (when so enormously magnified) too small to be distinguished: I mean at present the smallest species of animalcules, for most infusions exhibit a great variety of sizes. Two or three times the number of the inhabitants of *London, Westminster, and Southwark* crowded into the bulk of a grain of sand! Every one with an organised body consisting of the various parts necessary to animal life! What must then be the size of the particles of the fluid, which circulates in the veins of such animals? What the magnitude of a particle of light, to which the other is a mountain?

These few particulars are thus cursorily mentioned, only for the sake of an opportunity of remarking upon the oddness of the cast of some minds, which can spend years in examining such wonders of nature, going through the calculations necessary to determine facts, and yet stop short of the reflections so natural upon making the discovery, and for the sake of which alone, one would think it was worth while to have bestowed the pains. For it is really of very little consequence to us to know the exact proportion between the magnitude of a grain of sand and an animalcule in pepper-water, the wonderful regularity of the motions of all the great bodies in nature, describing equal areas in equal times, the amazing properties of light and colours, and the means by which vision is performed, and the like ; it is, I say, of very little consequence to know a number of facts which obtain in nature, if we never consider them farther than as dry uninteresting facts, nor think of applying our knowledge of them to some purpose of usefulness for life or futurity.

The invitations to acquire a general knowledge of anatomy, are innumerable. An animal body is indeed a system of miracles. The number of various parts adapted to such various uses ; the structure of the bones, as the supporters of the whole frame ; the number and apt insertion of the muscles, for performing the various motions of the body with ease and gracefulness ; the endless

less variety of vessels, tubes, and strainers, gradually lessening to imperceptibility, with the fluids circulating through them, and secreted by them, for the various purposes of nature, which render the body of an animal a system in which a greater number of streams are continually flowing, than those which water the largest kingdoms upon earth, or, more probably, than all that run in all the channels round the globe.

The eye alone, that miracle of nature, is a study for life. We find how difficult it is to form and adjust a set of glasses for any compound optical instrument. Yet glass is a solid substance, which will keep the form that is once given it. But the eye must be considered as a composition of various coats or pellicles, of three different humours, and a set of muscles to alter the form of those humours, and the aperture of the eye, instantaneously, according to the situation, or distance, brightness or obscurity, of the object to be viewed; at the same time, that the whole mass of the eye is to be considered as a system in which there are innumerable streams continually flowing. Now as we know, that in order to distinct vision, the laws of optics require the figure of the eye to be strictly true and regular; that it should continue fit for vision for a few moments together, considering of what soft and pliable substance it is made, and how continually changing its figure and state, is what we can in no respect give an account of. How delightful is the search  
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into these wonders! How naturally does it lead the well-disposed mind to love and adore the almighty Author of so excellent a work!

There is indeed none of the works of nature, down to the most common and contemptible (if any thing could be so called, which infinite Wisdom has deigned to make), that is not found, when attentively examined, to be, for curiosity, of structure, above the apprehension of any human mind. What is meaner, or more common than a pile of grass? Yet, whoever with a microscope, examines its various parts, will find it a work of such curiosity, as to deserve his highest admiration. In the blade he will find a double coat throughout, between which the vessels, which convey the juices to nourish it, are disposed. The minuteness of those tubes decreases to imperceptibility. Nor do the same vessels carry and return the juices. There are in every plant, and consequently in every pile of grass, two kinds of vessels, analogous to the veins and arteries in an animal body, by means of which a circulation of the juices is performed. The blade is also furnished with excretory vessels, to carry off by perspiration whatever juices may be taken into the plant, which may be superfluous, or unfit for its nourishment, and with absorbent vessels, at whose orifices nourishment is taken in from the ambient air, as well as from the earth by the root. The blade is always furnished with a strong fibrous substance running up its middle, and tapering to a point,  
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for supporting and strengthening it. The substance of the roots of all plants, is quite different from the other parts, in outward form and internal structure. It is so in grafs. Every fingle tendril is furnished with vessels, at whose open mouths the proper juices enter, which, as they mount upwards, are secreted, so that those which are proper for each respective part, are conveyed to it; and the other particles, by means of valves and other contrivances within the vessels, are stopped and turned back. The substance of the root itself is of three sorts, the cortical, or bark, the woody part, and the pith. Each of these has its vessels or passages, differently disposed, and of a different size and make, as the microscope shews. The seed itself is a miracle of curiosity. For in every fingle grain the stamina of the future plant, or rather the plant itself in miniature, is disposed, so that the growth of the plant is only the unfolding of the stamina, and their enlargement by the addition of new juices. If the opinion of some naturalists be well founded, viz. that in the stamina contained in a seed, there are also contained the stamina of the plant which is afterwards to spring from that, and so on for ever, this increases the wonder infinitely. It is likewise observed, that almost every plant, if cut off above the root, will send out new branches, leaves, and seeds almost endlessly. So that it would seem, that every stock of every plant, and consequently every stalk of grafs, as well as every seed, contained almost an infinite number of other plants, branches, leaves,

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and so forth, in miniature. But I will not urge this too far, because there is another hypothesis, which does not require such inconceivable minuteness of stamina, nor their being thus disposed one within another, without end, from the creation of the first plant: I mean, the supposition of those stamina floating in the air, in infinite numbers, and being received into proper matrices, and so fructifying. Be this as it will, there are, as we have seen, wonders without end in so despicable an object as a pile of grass. After all that has been said, there may, for any thing we know, be a thousand times more unknown of the internal substance or structure of a pile of grass. We know not how two particles of matter come to adhere to one another, why they do not fall asunder like grains of dust or sand. We know not how the particles of nourishment are taken into the vessels of the root of a plant; how they are carried on and secreted every one to its proper place; what it is in the make of the particles of the juice, and effluvia exhaled from the root and blade, which makes them taste or smell differently; what disposition of the external parts makes the root part appear white, and the blade green, and so on. Yet this subject, in which there are so many curiosities known to us, and enough of inexplicable difficulties to puzzle all the philosophers of ancient and modern times, is no rarity, but it is every where to be met with. The whole earth

is covered with it. Whilst every single pile, of which there may be some thousands in every square foot of ground, is formed with all the admirable curiosity and exactness I have been here describing. What then is the art displayed in all the various and numberless plants of different species which cover the face of the earth? What the profusion of workmanship in the innumerable multitudes of beasts, birds, fishes, and insects, which inhabit all parts of the earth and waters, of which every single individual displays wonders of inexpressible power and inconceivable wisdom beyond number? "Great and manifold are thy works, O Lord, in wisdom hast thou made them all."

If a person has a strong genius for mathematical learning, it will be natural for him to improve himself in the higher parts of that noble science, as plain and spherical trigonometry, conic sections, and fluxions. But it does not appear to me absolutely necessary to the idea of a well-improved mind, that a person be master of those abstruse parts of mathematics. On the contrary, I know not, whether the employing a great deal of time in those parts of science, which are rather sublime and curious, than useful in life, can be justified; at least, where a person has a capacity for improving himself and others in useful knowledge. On the other hand, it must be owned, that the exercising the genius in the most difficult parts of study, is not without its uses,

as it tends to whet the capacity, and sharpen the faculties of the mind, which may, for any thing we know, be of advantage to it, in fitting it for the sublime employments of future states. Add to this, that it is not always easy to say what is altogether useless in science. What has been at its first discovery looked upon as a mere curiosity, has often been found afterwards capable of being applied to the noblest uses in science, and in life. This has been experienced in no instance more frequently than in the discovery of mathematical proportions. Those of triangles were discovered before they were found to be of such important usefulness in mensuration, and navigation; and those in common geometry, in trigonometry, conics and fluxions, before they were applied to astronomical calculations. Nor can any one pronounce with certainty, that those which have not yet been applied to any direct use for improving science, or art, never will, or are incapable of it. Upon the whole, the pursuit of any study, however it may seem merely curious, rather than useful, is an employment incomparably more noble and suitable to the dignity of human life, than those of pleasure, power, or riches. Though this is not saying, that study is the sole business of life, or that it may not be carried lengths inconsistent with our present state.

For improvement in the higher mathematics, *Wolffius's* and *Wilson's* Trigonometry, *Muller's*,

or

or *De la Hire's* Conic sections, *Ditton's*, *Simpson's*, or *Maclaurin's* Fluxions may be studied.

At last we come to the summit and pinnacle of knowledge, the utmost reach of human capacity, I mean the *Newtonian* philosophy. This sublime of science is what very few, perhaps not six in an age, have been found equal to. The labours of that prodigy of our species; the calculations and demonstrations upon which he has founded his immortal and impregnable structure, are not to be investigated but by one possessed of the quickest penetration, the most indefatigable diligence, leisure, and vacancy of mind. There are, for example, some of his problems, which few men can hold out to go through; few minds being capable of keeping on the stretch for so long a time as is necessary for the purpose. It will therefore be in vain to advise readers in general to try their strength in this *Achillean* bow. It is however, possible to acquire a general idea of his philosophy from *Pemberton's*, and *Maclaurin's* views of it. They who would go farther, must read his *Principia* with the jesuits comment, and his *Optics*.

I will here give a list of books, which will make a pretty complete and useful collection upon the various branches of natural philosophy and mixt mathematics. *Ray's* Wisdom of God in the creation. *Derham's* Physico-theology. Nature displayed. *Nieuwentyt's* Religious philosopher. *Bacon's* and *Boyle's* Works. *Lieuvwenboek's* Arcana.  
*Adams's*

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*Adams's* Micrographia, and *Baker's* Employment for the microscope. *Ray's*, *Ruyseb's*, and *Gesner's* History of animals. *Willughby's* Ornithologia. *Swammerdam* of Insects. *Keil's* and *Gravesande's* Physics. *Gravesande's*, *Desagulier's*, and *Rowning's* Experimental philosophy. *Hill's* History of minerals and fossils. *Blackwell's* Herbal. *Martin's* Philosophical grammar, and *Philosophia Britannica*. The Tracts which give an account of the late discoveries in electricity. *Hales's* Statics. *Cotes's* Hydrostatics and pneumatics. *Miscellanea curiosa*. Philosophical transactions abridged, and those of the foreign academies of sciences. *Muschenbroek's* Physical essays. *Keil's*, *Winstow's* and *Heister's* Anatomy. *Monro's* Osteology. *Boerhaave's* *Œconomia animalis*. *Ray*, *Malpighi*, *Tournefort*, and *Sloan* of plants. *Keil's* and *Gregory's* Astronomy. *Pemberton's* and *Maclaurin's* Account of Sir *Isaac Newton's* Discoveries. Sir *Isaac's* Principia, with the jesuits comment. Dr. *Halley's*, *Huygens's*, and *Flamsteed's* Works. *Whiston's* Religious principles of astronomy. *Smith's*, *Gregory's*, and Sir *Isaac Newton's* Optics. *Boerhaave's* Chemistry. To which add, *Harris's* Lexicon technicum; *Chambers's* Dictionary; or the Encyclopedie now publishing.

A gentleman of fortune and leisure will do well to furnish himself with a few of the principal instruments used in experimental philosophy, as an air-pump, which alone will yield almost an endless variety of entertainment; to which add a  
condensing

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condensing engine ; a microscope, with the solar apparatus, which likewise is alone sufficient to fill up the leisure hours of a life ; a telescope of the *Gregorian* construction \* ; a sett of prisms, and other glasses for the experiments in light and colours ; a sett of artificial magnets ; an electrical machine ; and a pair of Mr. *Neale's* patent globes.

### S E C T. V.

*Of forming a Taste in polite Learning, and Arts.*

**T**O say, that a gentleman has attained the utmost perfection of the human genius, who is ignorant of the politer sciences of criticism, poetry, oratory, and antiquities, and of the elegant arts of painting, music, sculpture, and architecture, would undoubtedly be improper. And yet it may justly be affirmed, that a very moderate skill in them is sufficient ; as that kind of knowledge is at best only the embellishment, not the substantial excellence, of a character. Nor can it be denied, that many, especially men of fortune, do pursue the study of those elegancies to lengths inconsistent with the shortness and uncertainty of life, and with the awful and serious business to be done in it. Solid and useful knowledge, especially among the great, gives way almost entirely to taste.

\* The best and largest instruments of this kind, beyond comparison, than have ever been made, are those constructed by Mr. *Short*, of *Surry-street* in the *Strand*, *London*.

And even of that, a very great part is only affectation and cant, rather than true discernment. In music, for example, I think it must be owned, that there are few civilized nations, in which there is so little true taste as in *England*; the proof of which is, the extremely small number of our country-men and women, who excel either in performance or composition. In *France* and *Italy*, on the contrary, and several other countries of *Europe*, there are very few towns, or even villages, in which there are not some able artists in music. And yet we know, that there is not a country in the world, in which musicians, especially foreigners, are so much encouraged, as here. This cannot be ascribed to our natural taste for music; for that would appear in our excelling in the art. It must therefore be owing to an affectation of what we do not possess, which costs us a great many thousands a year, and must yield but very little entertainment. For the pleasure a person receives from music, or any of the other *beaux arts*, is proportionable to the taste and discernment he has in them.

Perhaps, the same might be said of some other elegancies, as well as of music. But I shall only in general add, that whoever pursues what is merely ornamental, to the neglect of the useful business of life, and, instead of considering such things only as ornaments and amusements, makes them his whole or chief employment, does not understand, nor act up to, the true dignity of his nature.

On

On the study of classical learning and antiquities, I cannot help saying, that it is really a matter of no small concern to see men of learning straining beyond all bounds of sense in heaping encomiums on the great writers of antiquity, which there is reason to think those great men would blush to read. To hear those gentlemen, one would imagine the antients all giants in knowledge, and the moderns pigmies. Whereas it is much more probable, that the antiquity of the world was its youth, or immature age, and that the human species, like an individual, have gradually improved by length of time; and, having the advantage of the enquiries and observations of the past ages, have accordingly profited by them, and brought real and properly-scientific knowledge to heights which we have no reason to imagine the antients had any conception of. The whole advantage antiquity seems to have of the present times; as far as we know, and it would be strange if we should reason upon what we do not know, is in works of fancy. The style of the ancient orators and poets is perhaps superior to that of any of our productions, in grandeur, and in elegance. Nor is it any wonder it should be so. In the popular governments of *Greece* and *Rome*, where almost every point was to be gained by dint of eloquence, and where kings were clients to private pleaders, it was to be expected, that the art of oratory should be cultivated, and encouraged to the utmost.



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The very sound of the *Greek* and *Latin* gives the writings in those languages a sweetness and majesty, which none of our feeble, unmusical modern tongues can reach. How should an *English* or *French* poet have any chance of equaling the productions of those who wrote in a language, which expressed the commonest thoughts with more pomp of sound, than our modern tongues will lend to the most sublime conceptions?

“Ton d’apameibomenos profephe podas oky  
“Achilleus.” Hom.

“The swift-footed Achilles answered him.”

Here is more grandeur of sound to express almost nothing, than *Milton* could find in the whole compass of our language to cloath the greatest thoughts that perhaps ever entered into an uninspired imagination. For what is there in the *Iliad*, stript of the majesty of the *Greek*, that can equal the following hymn to the Supreme Being, sung by the first parents of mankind in innocence :

“These are thy glorious works, Parent of good

“Almighty ! Thine this universal frame,

“Thus wondrous fair. Thy self how wondrous  
“then !

“Unspeaking ! who sitt’st above these heav’ns,

“To us invisible, or dimly seen

In

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" In these thy lowest works. Yet these declare  
 " Thy goodness beyond thought, and pow'r  
     " divine.  
 " Speak ye, who best can tell, ye sons of light,  
 " Angels! for ye behold him; and with songs  
 " And choral symphonies, day without night,  
 " Circle his throne rejoicing. Ye in heav'n!  
 " On earth join all ye creatures to extol  
 " Him first, him last, him midst, and without  
     " end, &c."

How would these thoughts shine in *Homer's*  
*Greek*! How would *Longinus* have celebrated such a  
 passage in a venerable antient! How would our  
*Daciers* and our *Popes* have celebrated it! Let us  
 not therefore be imposed on by sound; but, while  
 we pay due praise to antiquity, let us not refuse  
 it to such of the moderns as have deserved it  
 even in those arts, in which the antients have  
 exhibited their utmost abilities.

But though it should be confessed, that the  
 antient poets, orators, and sculptors have in some  
 respects out-done the moderns; when this is  
 said, all is said, that can with truth be affirmed  
 of their superiority to us. For in most parts of  
 solid science, they were mere children. Their  
 physiology is egregious trifling, and groundless  
 hypothesis, drawn not so much from nature, as  
 from fancy. Their theology or mythology is a  
 mixture of sense, mystery, fable, and impurity.  
 Their ethics are well enough for what they have  
 delivered. But it is a structure without con-  
 nection.

nection, and without foundation. Whoever has studied *Woolaston's* Religion of nature delineated, will hardly think *Aristotle's* Ethics, or *Tully's* Offices, worth reading, for the sake of improvement in real and scientific knowledge of the foundation and obligations of morality. He who has digested *Dr. Clark's* noble work, will hardly have recourse to *Cicero*, Of the nature of the Gods, for just ideas of the Supreme Being, and a rational scheme of religion. Who would name such philosophers as *Pliny*, or *Aelian*, with *Mr. Boyle*, or *Mr. Ray*? Who would think of comparing *Aristotle's* Logic with *Mr. Locke's*, or *Ptolemy's* Astronomy with *Sir Isaac Newton's*? There are many whole sciences known in our times, of which the antients had not the least suspicion, and arts of which they had no conception. All the discoveries made by those noble instruments, the telescope, the microscope, and air-pump; the phænomena of electricity; the circulation of the blood, and various other discoveries in anatomy; the whole theory of light and colours; almost all that is known of the laws by which the machine of the world is governed; the methods of algebra and fluxions; printing, clocks, the compass, gunpowder, and I know not how many more; are the productions of the industry and sagacity of the moderns. It is therefore very unaccountable, that many studious men should express, on all occasions, such an unbounded and unreasonable admiration of the antients, merely for the elegancies and subtilities,

limities, which appear in their works of fancy, which are likewise disgraced in many places by a trifling and childish extravagance, running often so far into the marvellous, as quite to lose sight of the probable. Witness *Virgil's* prophetic harpies, bleeding twigs, and one-eyed *Brobdignaggians*; *Homer's* speaking horses, scolding goddesses, and *Jupiter* enchanted with *Venus's* girdle; and *Ovid's* string of unnatural and monstrous fictions from the beginning to the end of his book.

Whoever may be disposed to question what is here said, as a peculiar or new notion, may read *Mr. Locke* on the conduct of the understanding, and *Wotton's* and *Baker's* Reflections on ancient and modern learning, where he will find the subject discussed in a more copious manner, than the bounds of this treatise would allow.

It is therefore very necessary that in cultivating a taste, people take care to value the antients only for what is truly valuable in them, and not to prefer them, universally and in the gross, to the moderns, who, by the advantage of succeeding to the labours of their ancestors, have acquired incomparably the superiority over them in almost all parts of real knowledge drawn from actual observation; in method and closeness of reasoning; in depth of enquiry; in more various ways, as well as more compendious methods, of coming at truth; and in general, in whatever is useful for improving the understanding; advantages as much superior to what serves

only to refine the imagination. and work upon the passions, as it is of more consequence that a man receive improvement in true knowledge, than that he pass his life in a pleasing dream.

Besides the antient historians mentioned under the article of history, whoever would form his taste upon the best models must be in some measure acquainted with the Greek poets, as *Homer*, *Pindar*, *Sophocles*, *Euripides*, *Callimachus*, *Theocritus*, *Aristophanes*, *Anacreon*. Their orators, as *Demosthenes*, *Isocrates*, and *Aeschines*. The philosophers, whose works in that language are come down to us, are to be looked into, not so much on account of their sentiments, of which above, as their style and manner. The chief of them are, *Plato*, who also gives an account of the philosophy of *Socrates*, *Aristotle*, *Xenophon*, *Plutarch*, *Epictetus*, *Longinus*, *Jamblicus*, who gives an account of *Pythagoras*; *Theophrastus*, *Hierocles*, *Aelian*. To these may be added *Philo Judæus*, *Diogenes Laertius*, and *Max. Tyrius*. The greatest antient philosophers, who writ in *Latin*, are *Cicero*, *Pliny*, *Seneca*, *Lucretius*, *Quintilian*, *Lucius Apuleius*, and *Boethius*. The best *Latin* poets are *Virgil*, *Horace*, *Terence*, *Juvenal*, *Perfius*, *Plautus*, *Lucretius*, *Seneca* the tragic poet, *Martial*, *Lucan*, *Statius*, *Ausonius*, and *Claudian*.

Whoever has a mind to look into the Fathers, after having got a little acquaintance with what is ascribed to *Barnabas*, *Clement*, *Hermas*, *Ignatius*, and *Polycarp*, and with the remains of *Clement Alexandrinus*, *Irenæus*, *Cyprian*, *Tertullian*,  
Justin

*Justin martyr, Origen, Jerome, Augustin, Eusebius, and Lactantius*, or as many of them as he can conveniently look into, may rest contented with what he will have gained by that study.

There may be a few other antient authors, *Greek and Latin*, which a gentleman may find his advantage in looking into. And there are great parts of most of those here mentioned, which it were better to pass over. There are, almost in all the antient un-inspired writers, numberless exceptionable and wrong-turned sentiments, of which the judicious reader's discernment will obviate the bad effects.

Useful books in criticism are *Hesychius, Suidas, Hedericus's* Lexicon, *Scapula, and Constantine's* Lexicon, *Stephens's* Thesaurus, *Ainsworth's* Dictionary, *Potter's* *Greek* and *Kennet's* *Roman Antiquities*, *Montfaucon's* *Palaographia Græca*, and *Antiquité Expliquée*, the various Authors collected in *Grævius's* and *Gronovius's* *Thesaurus*, in *Sallengre's* *Novus Thesaurus*, in *Gruet's* *Fax Artium*, and a multitude of others enumerated by *Wasse* in his Memorial concerning the desiderata in learning, printed in *Bibliotheca Litteraria*, Lond. 1733. N<sup>o</sup>. iii. Among the antients, *Aristotle, Longinus, and Quintilian*. Among the French, *Dacier, and Bossu*. And among the English, *Addison* and *Pope* are good critics.

I cannot here help making a remark upon the manner of most of those professed critics, who undertake to translate, comment, answer, or write remarks upon authors. These gentlemen

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men seem generally to run greatly into extremes either in praising or blaming. I own, I cannot persuade myself that *Homer*, for example, understood the anatomy of the human body as perfectly as *Boerhaave*, merely from the circumstance of his wounding his heroes in so many different parts. Nor can I think that Mr. *Chambers* could have extracted his circle of the arts and sciences out of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, even with the help of *Pope's* and *Dacier's* notes into the bargain. On the other hand, I cannot help thinking that there is some of the genuine spirit of poetry in Sir *Richard Blackmore's* works, notwithstanding what the satirical dean *Swift* has in the bitterness of his wit said against him. Nor does it clearly appear to me that all the heroes in the *Dunciad* deserve a place in the list of votaries of the goddess of dulness.

I have made this remark for the sake of taking occasion to caution readers not to let themselves be misled by critics, or commentators; but, after endeavouring to fix a set of rational, clear, and indisputable marks, whereby to judge of the real excellencies or blemishes of the works they read, whether antient or modern, to read the critics, but to use their own judgment.

The best *English* poets are *Spencer*, *Milton*, *Shakespear*, *Waller*, *Rowe*, *Addison*, *Pope*.

I mention only those whose writings are generally innocent. Wit, or genius, when applied to the corrupting or debauching the mind or manners of the reader, ought to be doomed to  
infamy

infamy and oblivion. And it is the disgrace of our country and religion, that such stuff as the greatest parts of the works of a *Dryden*, or a *Congreve*, and such like, should be in print.

Among the *French*, there are several good writers in the belles lettres, as *Corneille* and *Racine*, *Rollin*, *Dacier*, *Fenelon*, *Boileau*, and *Moliere*, the best writer of comedy who has flourished since *Terence*; his characters being all well drawn, his moral always good, and his language chaste and decent.

To acquire a taste in painting, sculpture, and architecture, travel is the most effectual means. But such, whose convenience it does not suit to go abroad, may see some small collections of valuable paintings and statues in our own country, and may with advantage read on painting and design, *Harris*, *Du Bos*, *Richardson*, *Fresnoy*, *Laireffe*, the Jesuit's art of perspective, *Des Piles*, *Roma illustrata*, *Da Vinci*, *Gravesande*, and *Ditton* on perspective.

On architecture, *Palladio*, *De Chambray*, *Felicien*, *Sebastian*, *Le Clerc*, *Perrault*, *Freart*, and *Evelyn*. And on statuary, *Alberti*, and *Richardson*.

## S E C T. VI.

*Of Travel.*

THERE are three countries, of which it may be an advantage to a gentleman of fortune to see a little, I mean *Holland*, *France*, and *Italy*. The first, with a view to commerce and



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and police; the second to the elegance of life; and the last to curiosities in art, antient and modern.

There is a pedantry in travel, as well as other accomplishments. And where there is not a direct view to real improvement, a great deal of time and money may be very foolishly spent rambling over the world, and staring at strange sights.

In order to reap benefit from travel, it is absolutely necessary that a gentleman know well his own country, before he sets out; that nothing he may meet with may be strange to him, but what is peculiar to the place he travels through, by which means he may save himself a great deal of, otherwise lost, labour. This will also enable him to determine immediately in what particulars our own country has the advantage of foreign parts, and the contrary. It will also be necessary, that he make himself master, before he sets out, of as much of the knowledge of foreign countries, and what may be worthy of his attention in them, as can be had in books, or conversation with those who have travelled, by which means he will go properly prepared to every place and every object. A correspondence with men of abilities and interest, in the places one is to go to, ought also to be established, before he sets out, that no time may be lost in finding out such after his arrival.

The principal objects of enquiry of a traveller are evidently, the characters and manners

ners of different nations, their arts of government, connexions, and interests, the advantages or disadvantages of different countries, as to administration, police, commerce, and the rest, with the state of literature and arts, and the remains of antiquity. An account of what one has observed in each different country, with the remarks which occurred upon the spot, ought to be constantly kept.

Nothing sets forth to view more conspicuously the difference between a young man of sense and a fool, than travel. The first returns from foreign parts improved in easiness of behaviour, in modesty, in freedom of sentiment, and readiness to make allowances to those who differ from him, and in useful knowledge of men and manners. The other brings back with him a laced coat, a spoiled constitution, a gibberish of broken *French* and *Italian*, and an awkward imitation of foreign gestures.

One good consequence of an *English* gentleman's having seen other countries, if he has any understanding, will be, his returning home more than ever disposed to enjoy his own. For whoever rightly understands wherein the true happiness of a nation consists, will acknowledge, that these highly-favoured lands, were they covered ten months in the year with snow, and boasted neither tree nor shrub, would have incomparably the advantage of *Italy*, with her orange groves, her breathing statues, and her melting strains of music; of *France*, with all her

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and police; the second to the clergy; and of  
and the last to curiosities in art, the new world.  
dern.

There is a pedantry in the united, but which  
accomplishments. And what first of blessings,  
rect view to real improvement, without which life  
time and money may be, I mean, the inestima-  
rambling over the world, enjoying in peace whatever  
lights.

In order to re-adorshipping the Almighty Father  
lutely necessary and simplicity, according to  
own conscience, unbyassed, and un-  
he may be by dragoons, by racks, and fires, and  
what is the inquisitors?

by whi  
deal

### S E C T. VII.

enab *the comparative Importance of the various  
per branches of Knowledge respectively, and with  
a regard to different Ranks and Stations.*

WE have thus taken a cursory view of  
science, and seen what is to be studied  
and learned, in order to acquire the distinguished  
and rare character of a man of general and uni-  
versal knowledge. To be completely master of  
every one of the branches I have here treated of,  
only as far as they are already known, is what  
no one man ever will be capable of, much less  
of improving them by new discoveries and ad-  
ditions of his own. But a man of fine natural  
parts, a strong constitution, a turn to applica-  
tion, an easy fortune, a vacant mind, and who  
has had the advantage of an early introduction,  
in

in a free and rational manner, into the principles of the various parts of knowledge, and of a set of learned and communicative friends, and of travel; such a person may, in the course of a life, acquire a masterly knowledge of the fundamental and principal parts of science, so as to apply them with ease and readiness to his occasions for entertaining and instructing others, as well as enriching and aggrandizing his own mind, and perfecting his whole character. Such a person may also improve some particular parts of knowledge by his sagacity and industry.

To consider only one's own entertainment and advantage, one ought rather to desire a general knowledge in a variety of ways, than to carry any one particular science to great lengths. For the advantage of learning, the improver of a single art or science is the most valuable man, though he may not be at all a completely-accomplished character.

The most important of all sciences, is ethics, with whatever is connected with them, as theology, history, the theory of government, and the like. Next to these physiology at large, or whatever comes under the head of pure and mixed mathematics. Inferior to these in importance are the politer arts of poetry, painting, architecture and the rest. And to possess ever so perfect a knowledge of languages only, I should reckon the lowest pitch of learning.

For persons of the mercantile ranks of life, the *Latin* and *French* languages, writing, arithmetic,

metic, and merchants accounts, geography, history, and the theory of commerce, are the indispensable branches of learning. They may pursue the others to what lengths their circumstances and leisure will allow.

To accomplish a gentleman for the bench, or for the employment of a chamber-counsellor, a perfect knowledge of the theory of government, and foundations of society, is indispensably necessary. To which must be added an immense apparatus of knowledge of the several species of law (which in *England* is the most voluminous and unweildy of all studies, our law being, to the shame of justice, a chaos, not an universe) and almost of every thing else, about which mankind have any connexion or intercourse with one another. As I cannot see the business of pleading at the bar, in any other light than that of a mischievous invention, calculated wholly for the purpose of disguising truth, and altogether incapable of being applied to any honest purpose (for truth wants no colouring) I shall therefore say nothing farther on the head of law.

The physician ought to be furnished with a perfect knowledge of the whole body of physiology. The main pillars, on which he is to erect his structure, are anatomy, chemistry, and botany. But the ablest and most successful of the faculty have always acknowledged, that experience is the only sure foundation for practice; and have advised students in that faculty, rather to neglect

neglect all other books, than those, which contain the history of diseases, and methods of cure, delivered by those who have been eminent in the therapeutic art.

As for divines, I cannot help, with great submission, remarking, that there is no order of men whatever, whose studies and enquiries ought to be more universal and extensive. Philological learning has, in my humble opinion, been too much honoured in being regarded as almost the only necessary accomplishment of the clergy. To form the important character of a teacher of sacred truth, a dispenser of Divine knowledge; what superior natural gifts, what noble improvements are not necessary, in our times, when the miraculous powers, by which Christianity was first established, have ceased! If it be the important business of that sacred order of men to labour for the improvement of human nature, it seems highly necessary, that they perfectly understand human nature. If the reformation of mankind be their province, they ought to be acquainted with the ways of men, as they are to be learned from history, and by conversation. The prevailing vices of the times; the hindrances to amendment; the current errors in opinion; the secret springs of the mind, by which it is worked to good or bad purposes; the innocent stratagems, by which mankind are to be won, first to listen to, and then to follow advice; the gentle arts of touching their passions, and acting upon their

minds, in such a manner as will suit their various casts and inclinations; these ought to be so thoroughly understood by a divine, that he may, both in the pulpit, and in conversation (by which last, he may gain as many, or perhaps more profelytes to virtue, than any way) be completely furnished for the instruction and reformation of mankind. The works of nature hold forth distinctly the glorious Author of nature. That knowledge ought therefore to be thought a necessary part of the learning of the sacred dispensers of religion, since just notions of God are the foundation of true religion. To enter deeply into the profound sense and noble beauties of Scripture, a considerable knowledge of the languages, in which the Sacred books were penned, is absolutely necessary. For the true idea of preaching, is making mankind acquainted with Divine revelation, as it stands in the Bible, from which every single doctrine or precept, to be communicated to the people, is to be drawn, and from no other fountain whatever. It is therefore greatly to be wished, that the too-prevalent custom of taking a detached passage of Scripture as a motto, and declaiming upon the subject from the preacher's own funds, were changed for a judicious practical comment upon a connected portion of Holy writ in such a manner, that the audience might in time come to comprehend the general scheme of revelation, and read the Scriptures with understanding, so as to judge for themselves.

themselves. To be duly qualified for this, a very great apparatus of critical learning, and knowledge of *Oriental* antiquity, and history, civil and ecclesiastic, is necessary. A thorough knowledge of the obligations of morality being absolutely necessary to a teacher of virtue, it is required, that he be a master in the science of ethics. And, as much more is to be done with mankind by affecting their passions, than by a cool address to their reason (though truth ought to be the basis of the pathetic), the principles of oratory are to be well understood by a preacher. Nor ought the embellishments of delivery to be neglected, as (I cannot help adding with concern), they are to a shameful degree. For while the mock-hero of the theatre studies how to give the utmost force of utterance to every syllable of the fustian rant, which makes the bulk of our stage entertainments, the venerable explainer of the Divine will to mankind treats of the beauty of virtue, the deformity of vice, the excellencies of a religion which has God himself for its author, the endless joys of heaven, and the hideous punishments of hell, and all in a manner so unmoved and unmoving, that, while the actor becomes the real character he represents, and commands every passion at his pleasure, the preacher can hardly gain attention; hardly seems himself (if we did not know it otherwise) to believe his own doctrines, or to care whether his audience do, or not.



But to return ; there is scarce any branch of knowledge which does not, one way or other, add a confirmation to revealed religion. Which shews that, if it were possible for a clergyman to master the whole circle of the sciences, he would find use and advantage from his acquisitions. And in conversation, what an ascendant would not a general knowledge of arts, of trade, of the various ways of life, give a reformer of manners over mankind, for their advantage, when he could enter into their ways, and deal with them upon their own terms ?

Considering the variety of requisites for completely accomplishing a divine, one cannot help saying, with the apostle, " Who is sufficient for these things ?" But be it at the same time observed, and let this work, if it should remain, inform posterity, that, by the confession of all sober and judicious persons, and to the confusion of the unthinking opposers of religion, and its dispensers, no period, since the first ages of the church, could boast a set of clergy of all ranks and denominations superior to those of *Britain* at this present time, either in human learning, in knowledge of Scripture, or sanctity of manners. Which things being so, what words shall be found equal to the atrociousness of their guilt, who have it in their power, but will not take the trouble, to remove from off the necks of the clergy the galling yoke of subscription to articles, creeds, and confessions, the impositions of men,

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in many particulars unintelligible, in more incredible, and in all superfluous; if Holy Scripture be, as declared in the articles of the church of England, the only, and the sufficient rule of faith.

The *Hebrew* original, and *Septuagint* translation of the Old Testament, the New in the original *Greek*, with *Beza's Latin*; and *Taylor's Hebrew Concordance*, and *Schmidius's Greek*, are the foundation of a clergyman's library.

Some of the best commentators on Scripture, are *Erasmus*, *Beza*, *Grotius*, and the authors in the collection called *Critici sacri*, abridged in *Poole's Synopsis*. The works of the following writers are also valuable, viz. *Mede*, *Patrick*, *Hammond*, the *Fratres Polonii*, *Vorstius*, *Raphelius*, *Elfner*, *Bos*, *Calmet*, *Whitby*, *Ainsworth*, *Newton*, *Locke*, *Clarke*, *Pyle*, *Pierce*, *Taylor*, *Benson*, *Lowman*; to which add *Fortuita sacra*, *Knatchbul* on select texts, and many more.

Besides the books mentioned under the heads of polite learning, philosophy, and other parts of knowledge, which no gentleman ought to be without, and besides those recommended under the articles, ethics, and church-history, the following ought by any means to have a place in the study of every divine; being the best helps for understanding those parts of knowledge, which are to him essential, viz. *Josephus*, *Philo Judæus*, *Stillingfleet's Origines sacræ*, *Prideaux's*, and *Shuckford's Connexions*, *Spencer* on the laws of

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the *Jews*, *Grotius's*, *Locke's*, *Comybeare's*, *Leland's*, *Jenkins's*, *Foster's*, *Benson's*, *Lardner's*, *Lyttelton's*, *West's*, *Duchal's*, *Fortin's*, and *Chandler's* Defences of christianity, *Clarke*, on natural and revealed religion, *Butler's* Analogy, *Rymer's* Representation of revealed religion, *Millar's* History of the propagation of christianity, *Low's*, *Edwards's*, and *Watts's* Surveys of the Divine dispensations, and Revelation examined with candor.

It is with no small pleasure that all sincere lovers of truth observe the greatest and best of men, in our later and more improved times, bravely asserting the noble and manly liberty of rejecting hypotheses in philosophy, and systems in religion; and daring to appeal, from conjecture in the former, and human authority in the latter, to the works of God in the natural world, and his word in Scripture, the only pure and uncorrupted fountains, from whence the candid and inquisitive mind may draw the wholesome stream of unsophisticated knowledge. That a worm of the earth should pretend to impose upon his fellow-creature the poor invention of his troubled fancy for the sacred truth of God, while the blessed volume of Divine revelation itself lies open to every eye, is a degree of presumption, which could scarce have been expected. And yet it is notorious, that, by means of human interposition, the Divine scheme has, especially in one church, been so egregiously perverted, as to be well nigh defeated of its gracious intention. But all societies,

eties, who have in any degree infringed the freedom of enquiry, have violated truth, and injured the cause of religion. Nor only they, who have had power to back with threatnings and punishments their own invented and imposed doctrines, but all who have made holy Scripture a subject of party-zeal, and have loaded the world with systems piled on systems, and confounded the understandings of mankind with subtle distinctions, and voluminous controversies, are to be considered as nuisances in the world of letters, and their works to be left a prey to the book-worm. A clergyman has no occasion to crowd his library with systematic or polemic lumber. Such authors may distract his understanding; but will not enlighten it. If he cannot in the Sacred books, with the help of the best commentators, read the truth of God, he will not find it in human systems and controversies.

People of fortune are peculiarly inexcusable, if they neglect the due improvement of their minds in the most general and extensive manner. And yet, it is to be lamented, that no rank is more deficient in this respect than that of the rich and great. That they, who pretend to set themselves at the head of the world, should be obliged to own themselves generally inferior to those they call their inferiors in the very accomplishments which give the most just pretensions to superiority! What can be more shameful! The man of business may plead for his excuse, that he has want-

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ed the necessary leisure for improving himself by study; the man of narrow fortune, that he could not go to the expence of education, books, and travel; but what can a lord plead in excuse for his ignorance, except that he thought himself in duty bound to waste his time, and his fortune, upon wenches, horses, dogs, players, fidlers, and flatterers?

The proper and peculiar study of a person of high rank is the knowledge of the interest of his country. But a man of condition ought to be ignorant of no part of useful or ornamental knowledge.

I will conclude what I have to say on the several ranks of life, and the peculiar and indispensable scientific accomplishments of each respectively, by adding, what cannot be too often repeated, That a perfect knowledge of morality and Christianity is the noblest endowment of every man and woman of every rank and order. A strong and thorough sense of the absolute necessity of universal virtue and goodness, as the only means of happiness, ought to be worked into the understanding, the will, and every faculty of every rational mind in the universe,

SECT.

## S E C T. VIII.

*Miscellaneous Cautions and Directions for the Conduct of Study.*

**I** WILL add to what I have said on that part of the dignity of life, which consists in the improvement of the mind by knowledge, a few brief remarks chiefly on the errors which people commonly run into in study, which are the causes of their failing of the end they have in view.

First, reading, or rather running through, a multitude of books, without choice or distinction, is not the way to acquire real improvement in knowledge. It is only what we digest, and understand clearly, that is ours. And it is not possible, that an insatiable devourer of books can have time to examine, recollect, and dispose in his head all he reads. The judgment of reading is, to make one's self master of a few of the best books on a subject; in doing which, a man of a tolerable apprehension will have acquired clear notions of it, or at least of the great lines and principal heads of it.

Some men of abilities run into the error of grasping at too great an extent and variety of knowledge, without fixing upon one study, with a view to pursue it a competent length. Life is short and uncertain, and awful and important the work to be done in it. Every man has his  
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proper business as a citizen, and his proper study as a man, to pursue. The knowledge more indispensably necessary to one's particular rank and profession, and that which every man ought to be completely master of, I mean, of his duty, and means of happiness, are absolutely to be made sure of. And this will not leave to any, but people of leisure and fortune, an opportunity of expatiating at large in pursuit of science. No man can hope to excel in a variety of ways. Few are able to excel in one single branch of knowledge. And by taking in too large a scope, it is no wonder that men can go but inconsiderable lengths in all, and accordingly become mere smatterers in every thing, knowing in nothing.

To avoid this error, the rule is easy. Be sure that you understand one thing, before you proceed to another: And take care that you allow for forgetfulness. What you understand pretty well now, a few years hence (if you drop that study) will not stand so clear in your mind as at present. What apprehension can you therefore expect to have, at some distance of time hence, of what you do not now clearly understand. The view in education is very different from that of study in mature life. In education, the business is to open the mind to receive the first principles of various knowledge, to furnish it with the instrumental sciences, to habituate it to application, and accustom it to exert itself with ease upon all kinds of researches, rather than to carry any one  
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branch of knowledge to perfection, which is not indeed practicable at an immature age. The intention, on the contrary, in the study of the more manly parts of science, in adult age, is to furnish the mind with a comprehensive and distinct knowledge of whatever may be useful or ornamental to the understanding. Therefore it is plain, quite different schemes are to be pursued in study at those two different periods of life. This necessary distinction is very little attended to. Accordingly the idea, which many educators of youth seem to have formed of their province, is, plunging a raw boy to a much greater depth in languages, than he will ever, at any period of life, be the better for, and neglecting the necessary work of laying an early foundation of general improvement. And on the other hand, the notion formed by many grown persons, of learning, is only, the reading an infinite number of books; so that they may have it to say, they have read them, though they are nothing the wiser for it.

As some readers are for grasping at all science; so others confine their researches to one single article. Yet it is certain, that to excel in any single art or science, being wholly ignorant of all others, is not the complete improvement of the mind. Besides, some of the different parts of knowledge are so connected together, and so necessary to one another, that they cannot be separated. In order to a thorough understanding  
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of morality, and religion (a study which might the best pretend to exclude all others, as being of infinitely greater consequence than all others) several collateral helps are necessary, as languages, history, and natural philosophy.

There is no part of knowledge, that has been singly set up for the whole improvement of the mind so much as classical learning. Time was when *Latin*, *Greek*, and *Logic* were the whole of education, and they are by some few narrow minds, which have had little culture of any other kind, thought so still. But it is to be hoped, that people will at last be wise enough to see, that, in order to the full improvement of the mind, it is not sufficient that one enter the porch of knowledge, but that he proceed from the study of words to that of things.

The pursuit of too many different and inconsistent studies at once is very prejudicial to thorough improvement. The human mind is so formed, that, without distinction, method, and order, nothing can be clearly apprehended by it. Many readers take a delight in heaping up in their minds a cumbrous mass of mere unconnected truths, as if a man should get together a quantity of stone, bricks, mortar, timbers, boards, and other materials, without any design of ever putting them together into a regular building.

Some read by fits and starts, and, leaving off in the middle of a particular study or enquiry, lose all the labour they had bestowed, and never pursuing

purſuing any one ſubject to a period, have their heads filled only with incoherent bits and ſcraps.

To prevent a turn to rambling and ſauntring, without being able to collect your thoughts, or fix them on any one ſubject, the ſtudies of arithmetic, mathematics, and logic, in youth, ought to have been purſued. But, if you have miſſed of that advantage, you may conſtrain yourſelf at times to ſtudy hard for ſome hours, with a fixed reſolution, upon no account whatever to give over, till the time is out. By this means you will come at length to be able to bear the fatigue of cloſe application. But after forty years of age, never think of going on with ſtudy, when it goes againſt the grain: nature, at that time of life, will not be thwarted.

With ſome men ſtudy is mere enquiry, no matter about what. And a diſcovery is to them the ſame, whether it be of an important truth, or of ſomewhat merely curious, or perhaps not even entertaining to any but ſuch dull imaginations as their own. Such readers reſemble that ſpecies of people, which the *ſpectator* diſtinguiſhes by the title of *Quidnuncs*, who paſs their lives in enquiring after news, with no view to any thing, but merely hearing ſomewhat new.

Were the works of the learned to be retrenched of all their ſuperfluities and ſpecious trifling, learning would ſoon be reduced into a much narrower compaſs. The voluminous verbal critics, laborious commentators, and polemical writers,  
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whose works have, for several centuries, made the presses groan, would then shrink into sixpenny pamphlets, and pocket volumes.

Such a degree of laziness as will not allow one to enquire carefully into the sense of an author; impatience, inattention, rambling, are dispositions in a reader, which will effectually prevent his improvement, even though he should upon the whole spend as much time over his books, as another, who shall actually become extensively learned.

Some consider reading as a mere amusement, so that, to them, the most diverting book is the best. Such readers having no view to the cultivation of their understanding, there is no need to offer them any directions for the conduct of study. The very great number of novels and tales, which are continually publishing, encourage in people a trifling and idle turn of mind, for which the present age is eminently remarkable, which makes any direct address to their understandings unacceptable; and nothing can please or gain their attention, that is not seasoned with some amusement, set off in some quaint or artificial manner, or does not serve to excite some silly passion.

There is nothing more difficult, than to come at a right judgment of our own abilities. It is commonly observed, that ignorant people are often extremely conceited of their own fancied knowledge. An ignorant person, having no man-

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ner of notion of the vast extensiveness of science, concludes, he has mastered the whole, because he knows not, that there is any thing to be learned beyond the little he has learned. But it will take many years study only to know how much there is to be studied and enquired into, and to go through what is already known ; and the most learned best know, how much, beyond all that is known, is quite out of the reach of human sagacity. There is indeed an infinity of things, in the strictest sense of the word, of which we cannot even know our own ignorance, not being at all within the reach of our ideas in our present state.

That a young person may not run into the egregious, tho' common, error at that time of life, of fancying himself the most knowing person in the world, before he has gone half-way through the first principles, or rudiments of knowledge, let him converse with a person eminent in each branch of science, and learn from them what labour he must bestow, what books he must read, what experiments he must try, what calculations he must go through, what controversies he must examine, what errors he must avoid, what collections he must make, what analogical reasonings he must pursue, what close resemblances in subjects he must distinguish from one another ; and so forth. And after he has gone through all that an able master in each science has prescribed, and has

learned all that is to be learned, and seen that all our learning is but ignorance, then let him be proud of his knowledge, if he can.

The universal smatterer knows nothing to the bottom. The man of one science, on the contrary, makes that every thing, solves all difficulties by it, resolves all things into it; like the musician and dancing-master in *Moliere*, who labour to prove, that the welfare of states, and happiness of the world, depend wholly on the cultivation of those two elegancies.

Some men seem to have minds too narrow to apprehend any subject without first cramping and hampering it. Nothing great or generous can find room in their souls. They view things bit by bit, as one who looks through a microscope. A man of such a character may know some subjects more minutely than one who is universally allowed to be a great man, and yet such a one must be acknowledged to be a person of very mean accomplishments. For it is not having a heap of unanimated knowledge in one's head, but having the command of it, and being capable of applying and exerting it in a masterly manner, that denominates a truly great and highly accomplished mind.

Mens natural tempers have a very great influence over their way of thinking. Sanguine people, for example, see every thing very suddenly, and often very clearly in one light. But they do not always take time to view a complex sub-  
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ject on all sides, and in every light; without which, it is impossible to determine any thing about it with certainty. Those tempers, when joined with weak judgments, make wild work in matters of enquiry and learning. For through haste and eagerness, they lay false foundations, or raise superstructures upon nothing. Sanguine tempers, however, are generally found to be the fittest for action, and without a considerable degree of zeal and warmth, men seldom carry any great design into execution.

Men of cold saturnine tempers are generally slow and laborious in their researches, doubtful and undetermined in their opinions, and awkward at applying their discoveries and observations for the general advantage of knowledge, and of mankind. But if the miner did not dig up the ore, the curious artist could not fashion the metal into utensils and instruments necessary in life. The laborious searcher after knowledge is necessary to the man of genius. For it is from him that he has the materials he works upon, which he would not himself bestow the drudgery of searching after. For a laborious turn is very rarely found to accompany brightness of genius.

Some people's reading never goes beyond the bulk of a pamphlet, who do not for all that quit their pretensions to disputing and arguing. But conversation alone does not go deep enough to lay a solid foundation of knowledge; nor does reading alone fully answer the purpose of digesting

and rendering our knowledge useful. Reading is necessary to get at the fundamental principles of a science. And the careful perusal of a few capital books is sufficient for this purpose. Afterwards to talk over the subject with a set of intelligent men, is the best method for extending one's views of it. For in an evening's conversation, you may learn the substance of what each of your friends has spent many months in studying.

If you can find one or more ingenious, learned, and communicative friends, with whom to converse upon curious and useful subjects, to hear their opinions, and ask the advice, especially of those who are advanced in life, and, having been at the seat of the muses, are qualified to direct you the shortest way thither; if you can find, in the place where you live, such a set of friends, with whom to converse freely, and without the trammels of systematic or academic rules, you will find more improvement, in a short time, from such a society, than from twenty years solitary study.

Some choose only to read on what they call the orthodox side, that is, books in defence of those opinions which the bulk of people receive without examining. They conclude, a great number of people cannot be in the wrong. Others take for granted, that whatever is generally received, must be wrong. Such readers are sure to peruse whatever comes out against articles,

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or creeds, or religion in general. But they do not take the pains to give the defenders of them the hearing. And yet there is no doubt, but prejudice is equally wrong on either side; and in our times, there are almost as many prejudiced against, as in favour of, formerly-received opinions. There is nothing commendable in believing what is true, unless that belief be the effect of examination. Nor is there any merit in opposing error, if such opposition is accidental, and the effect of prejudice.

In establishing a set of principles, most people let themselves be biased by prejudice, passion, education, spiritual guides, common opinion, supposed orthodoxy, or almost any thing. And, after having been habituated to a particular way of thinking, which they took up without examination, they can no more quit it, than they can change the features of their faces, or the make of their persons. To come at truth, one ought to begin with throwing out of his mind every attachment to either side, and bringing himself to an absolute indifference which is true, or which is false. He who wishes an opinion to be true, is in danger of being misled into the belief of it upon insufficient grounds; and he who wishes it to be false, is likely to reject it in spite of sufficient evidence for its truth. To observe some men studying, reading, arguing, and writing wholly on one side, without giving the other a fair hearing, making learning a party-affair, and stirring



up a faction against truth, one would imagine, their minds were not made like those of most rational beings, of which truth is the proper object; but that it gave them a pleasure to be deceived.

Though it is the business and the very character of a wise man, to examine both sides, to hear different opinions, and to search for truth even among the rubbish of error; yet there are numberless books, which I cannot think the shortness and uncertainty of life, which leaves no room for tedious trifling, will admit of examining with the care that must be bestowed in trying to find out the author's meaning, and to learn somewhat from him. As some writers, so to speak, never go deep enough to draw blood of a subject, so others refine and subtilise away all that the understanding can lay hold of. The logicians and metaphysicians, with their substantial forms, and intentional species; the *Malebranches* and *Behmens*! What fruit there is to be got from reading such writers is, to me, inconceivable. For the fate of all such refinements is, to be found partly unintelligible, partly absurd, and partly of no manner of consequence toward the discovery of any new truth.

Some men have the misfortune of an awkward, and, as it were, left-handed way of thinking and apprehending things. A great thought in such minds is not a great thought. For what is in itself clear and distinct, to such men appears dim and confused. Those gentlemen are mightily

mightily given to finding difficulties in the clearest points, and are great collectors of arguments *pro* and *con*. But their labours have no tendency to give either themselves or others satisfaction in any one subject of enquiry. It seems to be their delight to darken, rather than enlighten.

Want of education, or of so much culture as is necessary for habituating the mind to wield its faculties, is the same sort of disadvantage, for finding out and communicating intricate truth, as a raw recruit's never having learned the military exercise is for his performing the movements properly in a review or a battle. It is therefore matter of compassion to see silly people, without the least improvement by education, without the advantage even of first principles, striking flap-dash at points of science, of which they do not so much as understand what it is they would affirm or deny; disputing and confuting against those, who have spent their lives in a particular study; pretending, perhaps the first moment they ever thought of a subject, to see through the whole of it; taking upon them to make use of arguments, a sort of tools, which they have no more command of, than I should of the helm of a ship, in a tempest. The shortest way of finishing a dispute with people, who will be meddling with what you know to be out of their depth, is to tell them, what reading and study you have bestowed upon it, and

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that still you do not think yourself sufficiently master of the subject. If your antagonist has any modesty, he must be sensible, that it is arrogance in him to pretend, without all the necessary advantages, to understand a subject better than one, who has had them.

Men of business, and men of pleasure, even if they have had their minds in their youth opened by education, and put in the way of acquiring knowledge, are generally found afterwards to lose the habit of close thinking and reasoning. But no one is less capable of searching into, or communicating truth, than he who has been from his earliest youth brought up, as most of the great are, in pleasure and folly.

There is no single obstacle, which stands in the way of more people in the search of truth, than pride. They have once declared themselves of a particular opinion; and they cannot bring themselves to think they could possibly be in the wrong. Consequently they cannot persuade themselves of the necessity of re-examining the foundations of their opinions. To acknowledge, and give up their error, would be a still severer trial. But the truth is, there is more greatness of mind in candidly giving up a mistake, than would have appeared in escaping it at first, if not a very shameful one. The surest way of avoiding error is, careful examination. The best way of leaving room for a change of opinion, which should always be provided for, is to be modest in delivering

livering one's sentiments. A man may, without confusion, give up an opinion, which he declared without arrogance.

The case of those, whose secular interests have engaged them to declare themselves of a certain party, where conscience is not allowed to speak loud enough to be heard on the side of candid and diligent examination, is the most remediless of any. Those men having nothing for it but to find out plausible arguments for their pre-establiſhed opinions, find themselves obliged not to examine whether their notions be true; but to contrive ways and means to make them true in spite of truth itself. If they happen to be in the right, so much the better for them. If in an error, having set out with their backs upon truth, the longer they travel, the farther they are from it; the more they study, the more they are deceived.

There are some men of no settled way of thinking at all; but change opinions with every pamphlet they read. To get rid of this unmanly fickleness, the way is, to labour to furnish the mind early with a set of rational well-grounded principles, which will, generally speaking, lead to reasonable consequences. Take for an example the following one among many. "The only end of a true religion must be to perfect the human nature, and lead mankind to happiness." The reader must perceive at once, that such a fundamental principle, will serve to dis-

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cover and expose almost all the errors and absurdities of false religions, and those which may be introduced into the true. And so of other general principles.

Artful declamations have often fatal effects in misleading weak readers from the truth. A talent at oratory is therefore a very mischievous weapon in the hands of an ill disposed-man. It is the wisdom of a reader, when he has productions of genius put in his hands, to examine all the peculiar notions he finds in such writings, stripping them of their ornaments to the bare thought; which, if it will stand the test of cool reason, is to be received; if not, the style it is cloathed in ought to gain it no favour; but it ought to be rejected with indignation. Wit, humour, and raillery, have done infinite mischief among superficial readers. Of which talents some authors have such a command, as to be capable of working up unthinking and unprincipled people to believe or practise whatever they please.

Strive to understand things as they are in themselves. Do not think of conceiving of them otherwise than according to their real natures. Do not labour to explain religion by chemistry, to reduce morals to mathematical certainty, or to think of eternal rectitude as an arbitrary or factitious constitution. The nature of things will not be forced. Bring your understanding to them. Do not thing of reducing them to your hypothesis; unless you be indifferent about true knowledge,

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ledge, and mean only to amuse yourself with a *jeu d'esprit*.

In reading, labour to get into the full sense of the author's principal terms, and the truths affirmed in his propositions. After that, observe whether he proves, or only affirms roundly; whether what he says is built on fancy, or on truth and the nature of things. And do not pretend to believe him one hair's breadth beyond what you understand: you cannot if you would.

In conversation, or writing, if you mean to give or receive information, accurately define your terms. Keep to the original sense you affixed to them. Use no tautology. Think in time what objections may be made to what you are going to urge. Let truth be your sole view. Despise the pleasure of conquering your antagonist. Pronounce modestly, so as to leave room for a retreat. Keep yourself superior to passion and peevishness. Yield whatever you can, that your antagonist may see you do not dispute for contention's sake. When you have argued the matter fully, and neither can bring over the other, drop the subject amicably, mutually agreeing to differ.

If you would thoroughly re-examine a subject of importance, fancy it to be quite new to you, before you begin to enquire into it. Throw out of your mind all your former notions of it; and put yourself in the place of an honest *Indian*, to whom a missionary is explaining the Christian religion.

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religion. Take every single thought to pieces, and reduce every complex idea to its simples. Get into the author's precise sense in every general term he uses. Strip his thoughts bare of all flourishes. Turn every single point, in every complicated subject, all the ways it is capable of. View every minute circumstance, that may have any weight, not in one, but in all lights. Throw out of your mind every desire or wish, that may bias you either for or against the proposition. Shake off every prejudice, whether in favour of or against the author. Let the merit of every single argument be duly weighed; and do not let yourself be too strongly influenced by one you understand fully, against another, which you do not so clearly see through; or by one you are familiar with, against one that may be new to you, or not to your humour. The weight is of more consequence than the number of arguments. Labour above all things to acquire a clear, methodical, and accurate manner of thinking, speaking, or writing. Without this, study is but fruitless fatigue, and learning useless lumber.

Do not form very high or very mean notions of persons or things, where a great deal is to be said on both sides. Whatever is of a mixed nature ought to be treated as such. Judging of truth in the lump will make wild work. If an author pleases you in one place, do not therefore give yourself up implicitly to him. If he blunders

ders in one place, do not therefore conclude that his whole book is nonsense. Especially, if he writes well in general, do not imagine, from one difficult passage, which you cannot reconcile with the rest, that he meant to contradict his whole book; but rather conclude that you misunderstand him. Perhaps mathematics are the only science on which any author has, or can write, without falling into mistakes.

Take care of false associations. Error may be antient; truth of late discovery. The many may go wrong, while the few are in the right. Learning does not always imply judgment in an author, or soundness in his opinions. Nor is all vulgar error, that is believed by the vulgar. Truth stands independent of all external things. In all your researches, let that be your object.

Take care of being misled by words of no meaning, of double meaning, or of uncertain signification. Regard always in an author the matter more than the style. It is the thought that must improve your mind. The language can only please your ear. If you are yourself to write, or to preach, you will do more with mankind by a fine style than deep thought. All men have ears and passions; few strong understandings to work upon.

If you give yourself up to a fantastical, overheated, gloomy, or superstitious imagination, you may bid farewell to reason and judgment. Fancy is to be corrected, moderated, restrained, watched,



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watched, and suspected, not indulged and let loose. Keep down every passion, and in general, every motion of the mind, except cool judgment and reflexion, if you really mean to find out truth. What matter whether an opinion be yours, or your mortal enemy's? If it be true, embrace it without prejudice; if false, reject it without mercy: truth has nothing to do with your self-love, or your quarrels.

The credulous man believes without sufficient evidence. The obstinate doubts without reason. The sanguine is convinced at once. The phlegmatic withholds his assent long. The learned has his hypothesis. The illiterate his prejudice. The proud is above being convinced. The fickle is not of the same opinion two days together. Young people determine quickly. The old deliberate long. The dogmatist affirms as if he went upon mathematical demonstration. The sceptic doubts his own faculties, when they tell him that twice two are four. Some will believe nothing in religion that they can fully understand. Others will believe nothing relating to a point of doctrine, though the bare proposition be ever so clear, if it be possible to start any difficulty about the modus of it. Fashion, the only rule of life among many, especially, almost universally in the higher ranks, has even a considerable influence in opinion, in taste, in reading, and in the methods of improving the mind. It runs through politics, divinity, and all but the mathematical sciences.

And

And there are a set of people at this day weak enough to think of making even them yield to it, and of new-modeling and taking to pieces a system of philosophy founded in demonstration.

Parents may have misled us; teachers may have misinformed us; spiritual guides in many countries do notoriously mislead the people; and in all are fallible. The antient philosophers differed among themselves in fundamentals. The fathers of the church contradict one another, and often contradict both scripture and reason. Popes, and councils, have decreed against one another. We know our ancestors to have been in the wrong in innumerable instances; and they had the better of us in some. Kings repeal the edicts of their predecessors; and parliaments abrogate acts of former parliaments. Good men may be mistaken. Bad men will not stick to deceive us. Here is therefore no manner of foundation for implicit belief. If we mean to come at truth, there is but one way for it; to attend to the cool and unprejudiced dictates of reason, that heaven-born director within us, which will never mislead us in any affair of consequence to us, unless we neglect to use its assistance, or give ourselves up to the government of our passions or prejudices. More especially we of this age and nation, who have the additional advantage of Divine revelation, which also convinces us of its authority by reason, should be peculiarly unjustifiable in quitting

ting those sacred guides, to whose conduct Heaven itself has entrusted us, and of which, the universal freedom of the present happy times allows us the use without restraint, and giving ourselves up to be led blindfold by any other. And, besides reason and revelation, there is no person or thing in the universe, that ought to have the least influence over us in our search after truth.

All the operations of the mind become easy by habit. It will be of great use to habituate yourself to examine, reflect, compare, and view in every light all kinds of subjects. Mathematics in youth, rational logic, such as Mr. *Locke's*, and conversation with men of clear heads, will be of great advantage to accustom you to a readiness and justness in reasoning. But carefully avoid disputing for disputing's sake. Keep on improving and enlarging your views in a variety of ways. One part of knowledge is connected with, and will throw a light upon another. Review from time to time your former enquiries, especially in important subjects. Try whether you have not let yourself be imposed upon by some fallacy. And if you find so, though you have published your opinion through all *Europe*, make not the least hesitation to own your mistake, and retract it. Truth is above all other regards. And it is infinitely worse to continue obstinately in a mistake, and be the cause of error in others, than to be thought fallible, or, in other words, to be thought a mortal man. In examining into truth,  
keep

keep but one single point in view at a time; and when you have searched it to the bottom, pass on to another, and so on, till you have gone through all, and viewed every one in every different light. At last, sum up the collective evidence on both sides. Balance them against one another; and give your assent accordingly, proportioning your certainty or persuasion to the amount of the clear and unquestionable evidence upon the whole.

In reasoning, there is more probability of convincing by two or three solid arguments closely put, than by as many dozen inconclusive ones, ill digested, and improperly ranged. I know of no way of reasoning equal to the *Socratic*, by which you convince your antagonist out of his own mouth. I could name several eminent writers, who have so laboured to establish their opinions by a multiplicity of arguments, that, by means of over-proving, they have rendered those doctrines doubtful, which, with a third part of the reasoning bestowed by them, would have appeared unquestionable.

Of all disputants, those learned controversial writers are the most whimsical, who have the talent of working themselves up in their closets into such a passion, as to call their antagonists names in black and white; to use railing instead of reasoning; and palm off the public with, *rogue*, *rascal*, *dog*, and *blockhead*, for solid confutations,

as if the academy, at which they had studied, had been that of *Billingsgate*.

If one thinks he is in the right, it can be no great matter with how much modesty and temper he defends truth, so he does not give it up. And if he should be found afterwards to have been in the wrong, which in most disputable points is always to be apprehended, his modest defence of his opinion will gain him, with all reasonable people, a pardon for his mistake. There are so many sides, on which most subjects may be viewed, and so many considerations to be taken in, that a wise man will always express himself modestly even on those subjects which he has thoroughly studied. Nor can there be any danger, but contrariwise great advantage, in hearing the opinion of others, if one converses with men of judgment and probity; and those of contrary characters are not fit for conversation.

It is remarkable, and quite contrary to what one would expect, that young people are more positive in affirming, and more given to dispute, than the aged and experienced. One would think it should be natural for youth to be diffident of itself, and inclinable to submit to the judgment of those who have had unquestionably superior advantages for information. But we find on the contrary, that a young person, viewing a subject only from one side, and seeing it in a very strong and lively manner, is, from the sanguine temper natural to that time of life, led to dispute,

pute, affirm, and deny, with great obstinacy and arrogance. This is one of the most disagreeable and troublesome qualities of youth, otherwise so amiable and engaging. It is the business and effect of prudence to correct it.

The abilities of men, taken upon an average, are so very narrow, that it is vain to expect that ever the bulk of a people should be very knowing. Most men are endowed with parts sufficient for enabling them to provide for themselves, and their families, and secure their future happiness. But as to any thing greatly beyond the common arts of life, there are few, that have either capacity or opportunity of reaching it. Human knowledge itself very probably has its limits, which it never will exceed, while the present state lasts. The system of the world, for example, was originally produced, and has been since conducted, by a wisdom too profound for human capacity to trace through all its steps. History, at least profane, beyond the two thousand years last past, is come down to us so defective, and so mixed with fable, that little satisfaction is to be had from it. And the history of succeeding ages is far enough from being unexceptionably authenticated; though this is not denying, that physiology and history are still highly worthy our attention and enquiry. What I have said of these two considerable heads of study, may be affirmed in some degree of most branches of human knowledge, mathematics and

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mathematical sciences excepted. It is the goodness of the Author of our being, as well as the excellence of our nature, and the comfort of our present state, that the knowledge of our duty, and means of happiness, stands clear and unquestionable to every sound and unprejudiced mind; that the difference between right and wrong is too obvious, and too striking, to escape observation, or to produce difficulty or doubt; unless where difficulties are laboriously sought after, and doubts industriously raised; that where we most need clearness and certainty, there we have the most of them; that where doubts would be most distracting, there we must raise them before we can be troubled with them, and that where we most need full proof to determine us, there we have superabundant. For with respect to our duty, and future expectations, our own hearts are made to teach us them; and, as if the internal monitor, conscience, was not sufficient, heaven itself descends to illuminate our minds, and all nature exerts herself to inculcate this grand and important lesson, That virtue leads to happiness; and vice to destruction. Of which subject more fully in the following book.

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